

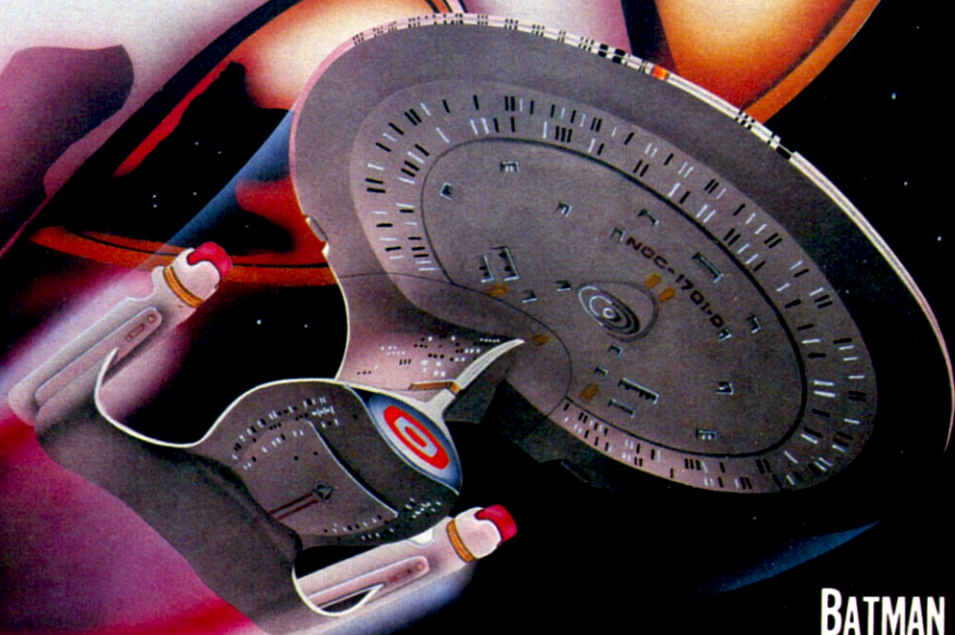
# CINEFANTASTIQUE

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## STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

### ZOOMING TO A FIFTH SEASON



**BATMAN II**  
Tim Burton Preview!

**FREDDY'S DEAD... OR IS HE?**  
Movie Producer Vows to Slaughter Cash Cow Slasher

*Voigt*

Volume 22 Number 2



# subspecies

THE NIGHT HAS FANGS.



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VOLUME 22 NUMBER 2

The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

OCTOBER, 1991

This is our second—in what could prove to be an annual—recap of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION. Writer Mark A. Altman's first inside look at the series (Vol 21, No 2), published at this time last year, proved to be the most popular feature we've ever published. To celebrate the series' return next year for its fifth season in September, marking the 25th Anniversary of the original STAR TREK's television debut, we felt it was appropriate to take another look back at the new show's just-completed fourth season, and a look ahead at what's in store.

According to Altman, STAR TREK's last season was its best one yet, as evidenced by his critical episode guide, which rates each series installment from one to four stars. Averaging Altman's ratings provides a seasonal ranking for the show as follows: first season: 2.520; second season: 2.532; third season: 3.000; and fourth season: 3.019.

This year Altman's episode guide is longer and more detailed. And that goes for his look behind-the-scenes at the making of the series, including interviews with the show's key creators as well as articles on the production of some of the season's most outstanding episodes, including "Family," and "The Best of Both Worlds."

Like last year, THE NEXT GENERATION ended with a cliffhanger, called "Redemption," to be concluded at the beginning of next season, a tale of civil war that splits the Klingon Empire. The show boasted the same kind of epic sweep and feature film quality and production values that made last year's wrap-up so exciting, but ended with the surprise revelation of Denise Crosby, who once played series regular Tasha Yar, in the role of a Romulan plotter. I'm reserving judgement until September, but let's hope this isn't the series' lame attempt to reintroduce Yar. Such a move would be on the Barnum & Bailey level of the dramatically bankrupt movie series which showed contempt for its audience by killing-off Spock only to bring him back, a cheap trick unworthy of a show that has proved itself to be one of the finest hours on television.

Frederick S. Clarke



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# HANNIBAL LECTOR,

## The first certifiable cult monster for the

By Thomas Doherty

Hair slicked back, laser intensity eyes gleaming and olfactory senses on high, the prisoner assumes a tightly wound posture and exudes an aristocratic delicacy, almost a shyness. He chooses his words purposefully and speaks with clipped enunciation ("I'll help you catch him, Clahr-eeze"). Vocally, his inflections are melodious, seductive—until the register shifts to a raspy whisper and a slithering tongue punctuates a recollection of a favored meal. The menu consists of the liver of an intrusive census taker, garnished with "fah-va beans."

The first certifiable cult monster of the '90s is Hannibal "the Cannibal" Lector, gourmet cook, ace psychiatrist, and serial killer. Hannibal—or rather British actor Anthony Hopkins' mesmerizing incarnation of the same—is the meat in the package that is Jonathan Demme's blockbuster version of Thomas Harris' novel, *The Silence of the Lambs*.

Lector sprang from the mind of Harris, ex-crime reporter and presently a very rich novelist. His two Lector-laden crime stories *Red Dragon* (1981) and *The Silence of the Lambs* (1988), are no-nonsense police procedurals. Both play off the doppelganger theme, a motif in which detective and killer, hunter and game, are linked in spirit and narrative.

In *MANHUNTER* (1986), director Michael Mann's fine film version of *Red Dragon*, on-the-edge detective Will Graham (William Peterson) has a spooky talent for psychic connection with his quarry. Graham can almost astrally project himself into the evil-doer's bent mind: the trick is to

**“A sizeable chunk of the mass audience, mostly female, has no stomach for the blood and guts that the gorehounds eat up—that’s Lector’s lesson for Hollywood.”**



Brian Cox, the proto-Lector of Michael Mann's *MANHUNTER* (1986), retitled by NBC for airing last May as *RED DRAGON: THE CURSE OF HANNIBAL LECTOR*.

get back out once he gets in. In order to conjure the scent of the maniacal serial killer of the moment, he visits the serial killer he caught in the past and who cut him open with a linoleum knife, none other than the imprisoned Hannibal Lector (here spelled Lektor). Director Mann gives early warning of his *MIAMI VICE* fashion sense by caging Lektor in the stark white decor of a techno bunker. As played by Brian Cox, this proto-Lector has some of the same markings—hairdo, British accent, cool authority—as the later Lector, but the character was peripheral to the main plot. Yet Cox's turn as Hannibal etched a sharp figure and bears favorable comparison with Hopkins' more famous embroidery.

Realizing what he had come up with, Harris moved Lector to center stage in *The Silence of the Lambs*. The plot outline is the same: a police agent coming to the imprisoned sociopath for help in catching yet another serial killer, this time a frustrated tailor named Buffalo Bill. One comment on how solid is the basic structure of the source novels is that, like Mann before him, director Demme left so much untouched. But of course what blew *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* over the top was not story but character, or rather the melding of the right actor with the role of a lifetime.

Hopkins, who showed a gleeful flair for personality disorder as the fractured ventriloquist in *MAGIC*, is the fran-

chise, the Joker to Jodie Foster's straight-man. He gets inside Lector's skin and gets inside ours. The horror genre has not been kind to actors: when their performance fails, it careens into comedy, but when it succeeds, it's deemed unworthy of serious regard. David Cronenberg is still burned that Jeremy Irons was overlooked for *DEADRINGERS*. Recall too that the Oscar night audience actually gasped when Kathy Bates won the Best Actress award for *MISERY*, the first time a horror role was so honored since—when?—Fredric March in *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* (1932). Hopkins' Hannibal Lector is surely the best personification of psychotic malevolence since Tony Perkins' Norman Bates checked out Janet Leigh: a monster without makeup, automatic weaponry, or supernatural powers.

Driven by Hopkins, *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* maintains a virtually uninterrupted forward motion of tension and psycho-malevolence. Demme plays it straight down the line. The suspense set up for the first meeting with Lector is a choice bit of extended foreplay and first person point-of-view that also prepares us for the impact of a later scene: Lector's animalistic reliance on his sense of smell in his first psych-out exchange with Foster as Starling deepens the nausea of the autopsy scene, during which Buffalo Bill's skinned floater is given the forensic once-over. That dab of Vick's VapoRub under the nose helps only a little.

As FBI-trainee Clarice Starling, Foster is earnest, but for all the tight close-ups of her furrowed and fevered brow, she's something of a blank slate. Which may be the point:

# HORROR SUPERSTAR

'90s, a sign of the genre's new direction.

Demme's camera strokes her face with the same compulsive attention that Lector probes her psychic landscape. Once Lector's perfectly pitched ear picks it out, Foster's downhome accent—a generation away from the hillbilly—seems on the mark. Odd that the Yale graduate and ex-child star should claim as her own screen persona a self-reliant woman with working class roots. Creepily but unavoidably too, Foster's real-life victimization by another demento is an uncomfortable complement to an already unnerving action. The expected plot twist (one set up in the trailers with a Hitchcockian wickedness) is that the escaped Lector will pursue Starling. But for once the female protagonist is not defined by her erotic power or relegated to victimized rabbit. Starling is the steady agent of law and order here, getting her own head together and running Buffalo Bill to ground.

Jack Crawford (Scott Glenn) is Starling's FBI boss and father figure: the film is very clever about the female's need for approval not from a lover, but from a father. Scott and Foster wisely keep the relationship professional: The film is about Thanatos, not Eros. To be sure, there is an undeniable eroticism in the dialogue between psychiatrist and patient, itself a kind of seduction. In the psychological *pas de deux*—in which Lector trades information about Buffalo Bill for a peek inside Clarice's head—the pair dance and flirt and come to their own mental climax.

There is a delicious irony in Lector's chosen professional and expert credentials. Psychology, a philosophy whose faith is in therapy and causa-



Director Jonathan Demme (r) prepares Anthony Hopkins for a scene as Lector in *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, creative insight that melded the right actor with the role of a lifetime.

tion, cannot explain or contain its most adept practitioner. Lector is frankly evil and totally sane, a beastmaster familiar to the prophets of the Old Testament, but not the secular humanists of orthodox Freudianism. From a purely professional standpoint, Lector is shoulders above his pretentious shrink Dr. Chilton (whom Lector tweaks about his failure to publish in prestigious medical journals). When Chilton refers to himself as Lector's "Nemesis," it is mere bravado—he's an unworthy opponent, not in Lector's league. In a film with no fewer than two vile serial killers, Demme makes Chilton the main target of audience hatred. When the smarmy Chilton taunts a straitjacketed, hockey-masked Lector, a Lector point-of-view shot picks up the detail of a ballpoint pen, carelessly left in the doctor's cell. Americans always admire a resourceful underdog. After Lector performs a makeshift face-lift and escapes in a brilliantly executed switcheroo, the emotional link between

spectator and murderer is complete. In the denouement, the liberated Hannibal the Cannibal hungrily eyes Chilton and remarks that he's having an old friend for dinner. Everyone cheers.

The remorseless, coldly calculating and hypersane serial killer was last showcased to advantage in *HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER*. Henry's problem—box-office wise, that is—was his deplorable lack of wealth and taste, a prerequisite for any sympathy for the devil. Doubtless Lector has a perverse *savoir faire*, but the huge crossover appeal of *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* confirms a recent rediscovery by the motion picture industry: that a sizeable chunk of the mass audience (mostly female) has no stomach for the blood and guts that the gorehounds eat up. The splatter film, the staple of the late '70s and '80s horror, has all but dried up in deference to the old-fashioned psycho-thriller, currently the preferred form for cinematic horror.

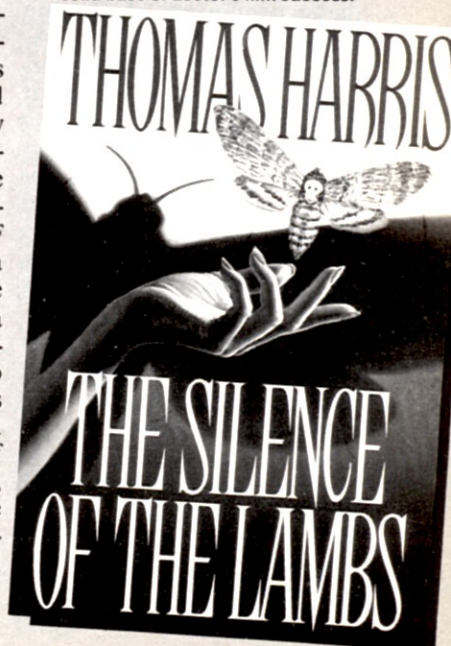
While horror filmmakers

once went to extremes to outgross each other with liters of fluid and squishy eviscerations, the neo-Hitchcockians downsize the effects and body count. Since *THE EXORCIST* (1973), the horror strategy was not simply to go for the jugular but to wring the neck until torrents of blood spurted out of the distended vein and cascaded around the room. By contrast, three of the season's big suspense/horror hits—*MISERY*, *SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY*, in which the big fright moment is a rear-ranged towel rack, *for-god's-sake*, *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*—are notably lacking in florid carnage and forensic detail. The revitalized boxoffice power of the female audience at work.

Like the exploitation pictures of Roger Corman's New World Pictures in the '70s, the unit where Demme cut his

continued on page 60

The source novel by an ex-crime reporter provided the structure and solid base of Lector's film success.



# BODY PARTS

By Gary Kimber

Paramount Pictures rushed the release of **BODY PARTS**, an \$11 million "psychological thriller" about limb transplants and their nasty side effects, opening the film August 9th to cash in on the hot summer boxoffice season. Shot on a 45-day schedule last December and January in Toronto, the film is directed by Eric Red, the horror *auteur* who co-produced and co-wrote **NEAR DARK** and wrote **THE HITCHER**. Red co-wrote the script for **BODY PARTS** with Larry Gross (**48 HOURS**, **ANOTHER 48 HOURS**) and Norman Snider (**DEAD RINGERS**). Jeff Fahey stars as a psychologist who suffers strange side effects when the right arm of a death row serial killer is grafted onto his body after an accident.

Produced by Frank Mancuso Jr., the horror godfather of Paramount's now moribund **FRIDAY THE 13TH** film and television series, **BODY PARTS** features the special effects prosthetic handiwork of Gordon Smith (**NEAR DARK**, **JACOB'S LADDER**), who is currently working on **JFK** for director Oliver Stone. The press notes describe the film as "based on the novel *Choice Cuts* by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac," the authors of the book that served as the basis for **DIABOLIQUE** (1955), the French horror classic directed by Henri-George Clouzot and starring Simone Signoret. Red said the film's connection to Boileau-Narcejac is merely incidental.

"The script is not actually based on *Choice Cuts*," noted Red. "It's an original script that we found had similarities to the novel. We bought the rights so we could ensure we

## Horror auteur Eric Red's bloody baptism in the rigors of makeup effects



Makeup supervisor Gord Smith makes Jeff Fahey's arm appear to be the grafted limb of a psychopathic killer, on the set of **BODY PARTS**, Paramount's low-budget summer shocker.

could make the film along the same lines without any legal repercussions." A cursory examination of the film's plot also reveals striking similarities to another French novel, Maurice Renard's oft-filmed 1920 thriller *Les Mains d'Orlac* (*The Hands of Orlac*).

Red said that he attended transplant operations as part of his research for **BODY PARTS**. "As far as I know there is no serious speculation in the medical community that another person's body part could take you over, that there is evil in the genes," said Red. "But there is a chance some element of personality lives on in transplanted limbs. We consider where the soul lies in **BODY PARTS**."

Noted effects supervisor

Gord Smith, "We tried to be as medically authentic with it as possible. We researched what amputations looked like. In reality you can lose your arm just above the elbow and it can be re-attached. It takes quite a while to function as before. Same thing with putting a toe where your thumb used to be. We went to doctors to find how it is done."

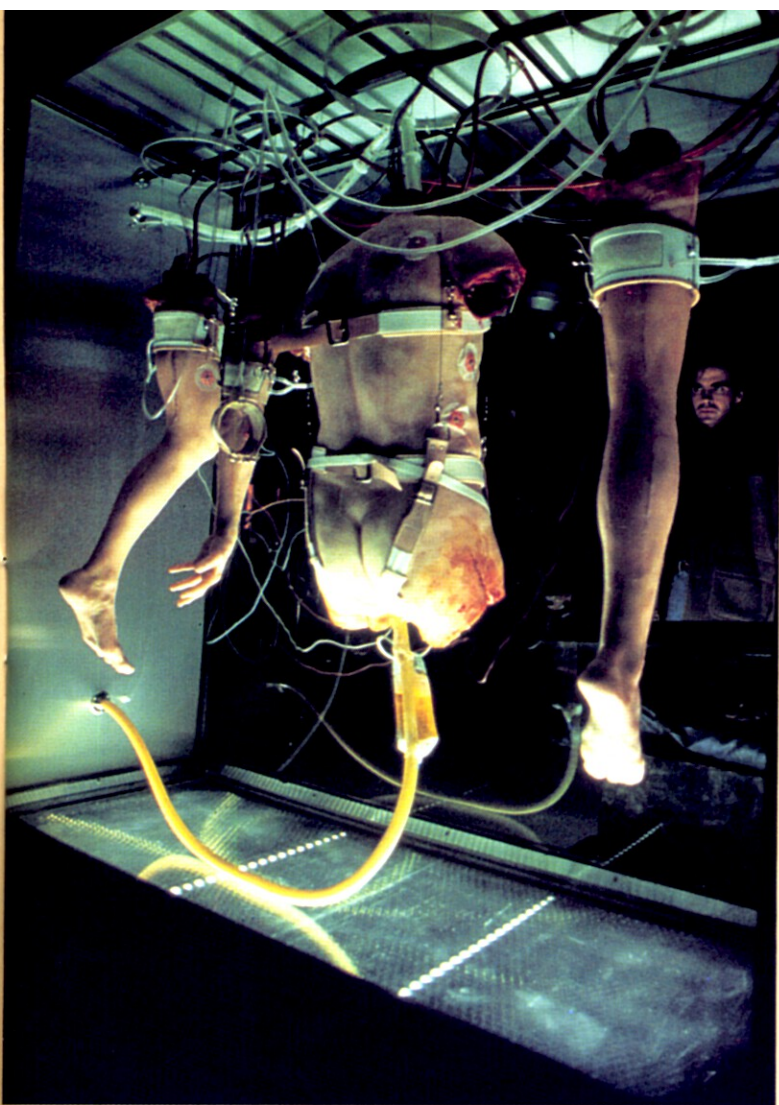
Red pointed out that he had worked with special effects before on **COHEN AND TATE**, his film directing debut, "but nothing like the massive effects in **BODY PARTS**." Smith described his working relationship with Red as "frustrating but interesting. He had to be guided very carefully through the picture. Initially, he had a hard time with the visual

aspects. He very much wanted to make it a cartoon in the sense of making everything oversized. He wanted a guy with an arm like a gorilla, which he interpreted as something quite horrific. The reality of trying to manufacture something like that and putting it on an actor would be anatomically impossible."

According to Smith, Red's original concept was to have the serial killer, whose limbs are grafted onto Fahey and the film's other principals, be a giant. "Had we been doing animation it could have been done that way," said Smith. "We battled like crazy. Eric was open-minded enough to just accept what he was being told. It took a long, long while, mind you, which wasted a lot of time and energy, to get him to believe what we were telling him. Once he came around, everything turned out very, very well."

Smith said the film's producers were "afraid of the special effects," leaving them to the last minute. "As a result they ended up not even getting half of what was originally supposed to be in the movie. That is typical with a director not used to dealing with effects. He was scared so he stayed away from it as long as he could." Added Smith, "I think I was the one who scared him, which was unfortunate."

Pursuing the luxury of experimentation that Smith enjoyed creating the little seen hallucination monstrosities in **JACOB'S LADDER**, urethane formulations were utilized exclusively in creating the prosthetic limbs seen in **BODY PARTS**. "The application time was cut down radically," said Smith. "Very little makeup was required for any of the prosthetic work." Added Red,



The stars of the title, ready for transplantation. Smith's handiwork for the film included life-like, remote-controlled ambulatory limbs, constructed of urethane.

"What is difficult about conventional prosthetics, like foam rubber, is it doesn't look very good next to human skin. We used translucent urethanes to give it a more skin-like quality. They have their limitations too, but generally worked well. I certainly pushed Gordon to do things I think he thought were impossible, but quite a few of them we did."

What Smith found most

exciting on the film was creating the special effects of the story's animated dismembered limbs, seen in the climax. "They were all remotely controlled," said Smith. "You could hold a leg in your arm and it would wrestle itself free from you. It was almost difficult to hold onto. The leg would begin to take on a life of its own. Toes twitched. Jim Gollie and Peter Colpitt de-

signed the inside mechanics. It was a very small, confined area to do that many movements. Both legs, arms and torso were all moving separately, simultaneously. I tried to get them to utilize those pieces as much as possible because that is where the horror of the whole show existed. The guy had been disembodied but he was somehow alive, still violent."

Smith insisted that the film's emphasis is on its psychological aspect. "It's not a gorefest," said Smith. "When you see the horrors, many could be hallucinations." Smith gave Red high marks as a director despite what he termed his "technical downfalls."

Noted Smith, "Eric knew what he was doing—he's a master of the structural reality of what it is to make a film. He knew the script so intimately he was able to get it done. His DOP [Theo VanDesande] really saved the day. He was always getting shit from Red and the producers for wasting time but he was the only one putting major quality into the picture. It turned into a very big stunt show, a lot of car crashes. They traded off the special effects I had built for some mundane stunts. They are more fun to shoot. They aren't as technically oriented. You just hire a bunch of guys daring enough to wreck cars with themselves inside."

Smith complained of inadequate preproduction lead time to prepare the elaborate effects Red envisioned. "I was given three weeks preproduction and we kept building all the way to the very, very end," said Smith. "No time for testing, no time for design. Eric wanted ten times more than we could give



Writer-turned-director Eric Red, the distinctive author of such shockers as *THE HITCHER* and *NEAR DARK*.

him but time prevented it. There was only enough money to pay for the time they had. We were certainly flying by the seat of our pants. Many days we weren't sure we could pull that day's gags off or not. We almost blew the hospital stuff because we lacked the time to get it made properly."

*BODY PARTS* was shot on an "extremely tight schedule," per Smith, one that he said was inadequate to shoot the effects that were envisioned. "They pissed their time away," said Smith. "No time was allotted to us to shoot the special effects. We repeatedly told them how many hours were required to do them and they totally disregarded it until the end. The last day they decided they wanted to get all the special effects done. A week's worth of shooting in one day! We had a bit of a blow-out over it. Someone had to call Frank Mancuso Jr. to get it straightened out. They decided to shoot solely what they needed and call it a day."

Despite the difficult shoot, Smith said he had no hard feelings. "I like Eric a lot," insisted Smith. "Eric loves his writing. He's the kind of guy who could talk about his writing forever, because it's orgasmic reality to him. And he's a very good writer. We battled like cats and dogs, but it was a professional thing." □

Smith's limbs, featured in the film's grisly climax. Below: When effects shooting proved too time consuming, makeups got supplanted by car stunts.



# FREDDY'S DEAD!

**It's Krueger's Elm Street swan song, comin' at ya' in 3-D!**

*By Steve  
Biodrowski*

New Line Cinema promises to dispatch Freddy Krueger once and for all in **FREDDY'S DEAD: THE FINAL NIGHTMARE**, the sixth film in their **NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET** series, due to open nationwide September 13th. Robert Englund returns in the starring role, this time supported by Yaphet Kotto, Lisa Zane and Sean Greenblatt. Alice Cooper, Johnny Depp and Roseanne Barr make cameo appearances.

Englund dubbed the new film's effects-laden finale, a "Mr. Toad's wild ride through Freddy's brain," filmed in a new red-green 3-D process developed by the Chandler Company, with opticals and computer animation by Dream Quest. Making her directorial debut on Part VI is Rachel Talalay, producer of Parts III and IV and two John Waters films, **HAIRSPRAY** and **CRY BABY**. The script, by New Line director-of-development Michael De Luca, for the first time takes Freddy away from Elm Street and into an urban landscape, its plot focusing on a mystery:



Robert Englund as Krueger with director Rachel Talalay, a production accountant on the original film who went on to produce parts 3 and 4, now making her directing debut.

which of the two young leads is Krueger's child, who was taken away when he was incarcerated?

Of course, the real mystery is whether or not New Line is actually serious about bringing their **NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET** saga to a close. After all, genre fans have good reason to be skeptical of the word "final," since Paramount's rival Jason series barely paused for breath in 1984 after **FRI-DAY THE 13TH: THE FINAL CHAPTER**. Will **THE FINAL NIGHTMARE** really be Freddy's permanent demise? "That's what they tell me," said Englund, adding, "I don't see how

they can top this one. It'll be a fun way to say goodbye to this character who's been very good to me."

Talalay acknowledged the title's potential as a marketing ploy but insisted that she is sincere in trying to make this installment truly final. "It's probably time to wrap up the series," said Talalay. "There's a place to go with the concept but not necessarily with the character of Freddy. I think the concept of someone who can haunt your dreams is wonderful, but does that need to continue to be Fred-

dy? Robert is not certain he wants to do this for another ten years. It might be time to say, 'This is it,' and go all out, which is what we're honestly trying to do.

"For me," continued Talalay, "I'm glad to be able to try to make this better than any of the previous ones. I don't want to do another in the series after this. After IV, I said, 'These films are too hard; I've had enough.' Sometimes in the middle of this film, I remembered why I'd said that. But if New Line wants to resurrect Freddy sometime in the future—I'm not going to swear



Krueger dies in the sixth installment of New Line Cinema's horror franchise, opening on September's Friday the 13th.

that will never happen."

Having produced the previous Freddy features taught Talalay "a huge amount—not just who Freddy is and what works for the stories and what our audience likes, but also how New Line has managed to make these films for very little money. I think there are flaws in all of them, except maybe the original, because it didn't have anything to be compared to. IV had no story. We wrote the effects before we wrote the story, and we were patching the story together throughout the production process. And V had too convoluted a story. Freddy wasn't integrated into it enough. What I tried to bring to this was a real story. And New Line wanted to interest a slightly older crowd, so we discussed having an adult lead. I wanted to get a stronger cast than we had before. Mostly what I'm proud of is we have a story that works. Freddy is totally integrated, yet he's not





Lisa Zane, playing Krueger's daughter, uses the dream demon's own finger knives to dispatch him in the real world.

the only story element. I think that's what makes it really different."

Despite the new urban setting, Part VI returns to Freddy's Springwood home town for its finale. "There are no kids left and the town's gone crazy," said Talalay. "We've got all these incredibly eccentric characters. It's like taking John Waters and VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED and putting them together."

Talay said she avoided repeating the formula of the previous films. "The obligatory scenes we tried to do without: the explanation of who Freddy is, and the mourning scene of everybody standing around, all this 'I'm so depressed my friends died.' To avoid that, we just made everything happen in such a short period of time that you're running for your life immediately, and there's not enough time to say, 'Let's go to the funeral.' I wanted to get away from making the

## ...OR IS HE?

*Makeup expert John Carl Buechler crafted the effects for Krueger's explosive demise.*

*By Steve Biodrowski*

After so many previous demises proved temporary, how do you kill Freddy Krueger? "I ask [director] Rachel Talalay, and she tells me what to do?" quipped John Carl Buechler, whose Magical Media Industries provided Krueger's explosive farewell in the new sequel.

"The bit here that the others don't have has more to do with story than effects," said Buechler. "We don't know that much about what kind of person Freddy was before he became this demented dream demon, or about his family. The story explores that. An actual family member drags him back into reality and kills him with real weapons. There's a huge makeup effect involving his death, but it's not as surrealistic as his previous demises have been, because he dies in the real world."

Buechler, with Freddy's thumbs-up effects prop. Only audience thumbs-down at the boxoffice will kill Freddy.



The script by New Line development executive Michael DeLuca, based on Talalay's treatment, reportedly introduces a new bit of mythology to the series: the Dream Demons, who find the most twisted, evil human imaginable and give him the power to cross the line between dreams and reality. They imbued Freddy Krueger with powers that make him invulnerable in the world of dreams, but leave him vulnerable in the real world. The idea, however, isn't exactly a new one. Krueger was pulled back into reality and dispatched during the climax of Wes Craven's original film. The new sequel never addresses the apparent contradiction.

Opting for a more realistic approach to Freddy's demise made coming up with a visually exciting climax a little tricky. "We went through a number of different ideas, and everything was just too close to what had been done in NIGHTMARE IV, which was probably the one that had the most superior effects," recalled Buechler. The solution was to go for a more visceral, graphic demise: "[New Line chief] Robert Shaye turned to me in one of our production meetings, put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'John, I want this one to be bloody.'"

Buechler sculpted Freddy's body from a life cast of star Robert Englund, assembled it in units: top half, bottom half, and head, and rigged it to blow up. As each section was assembled on set, matching Englund's pose, it was laced with primacord, an explosive, and stuffed with cranberries,



Freddy cuts off his own fingers, one by one, recalling the previous attempts to do him in, a Buechler effects gag.

artificial blood, foam latex organs, and real animal entrails. "You can't get more like liver than actual liver," claimed Buechler. "We found some of the worst parts in most butcher shops and filled it to the brim with grim, as it were."

Because a primacord detonation is extremely quick, registering as a mere flash at regular film speeds, slow-motion photography was necessary to capture the full, bloody effect—a technique complicated by the 3-D process in which it was filmed. "As soon as one was blown up, we had our crew go in and prepare the next one," recalled Buechler. "But we had to wait for the set crew to clean up the mess from the previous explosion. It was very much a wet-splatter type of situation."

Though Freddy may be dead, a source close to the production suggested that this NIGHTMARE be anything but final. Though New Line Cinema is said to be still toying with the film's ending, one open-ended scenario under consideration has the Dream Demons descend upon another small town and find another abused child. Open ending or not, VI's fate as a money maker will determine whether the cycle continues or whether Freddy ever returns. For Freddy to be truly dead, he has to die at the boxoffice first. □

same film about the same Springwood kids. We tell a lot of new Freddy history at the end, in order to figure out how to kill him. The assumption is the audience knows who he is."

New Line's decision to end the series seems to be based partly on the box-office disappointment of Part V. "There were a lot of mistakes," said Talalay. "My husband [Rupert Harvey] produced Part V, so I know what went on. I think most of the mistakes were on New Line's part—being too anxious, too greedy. Right after IV, they put out the television series and went into the next feature. I think it was too early to bring it out in August. They should have looked at the marketplace during that blockbuster summer and said, 'We can't compete.' I also think, frankly, that they did a horrible job marketing V. They did this ad, Freddy with a cigar, saying 'Freddy Delivers!' It was very glib. It didn't say, 'This is the scariest NIGHTMARE yet.' It just said, 'We're here again; we don't take this seriously; we know you're going to come.' And the audience said, 'If that's the way you handle the sequel, we don't want to see it.'"

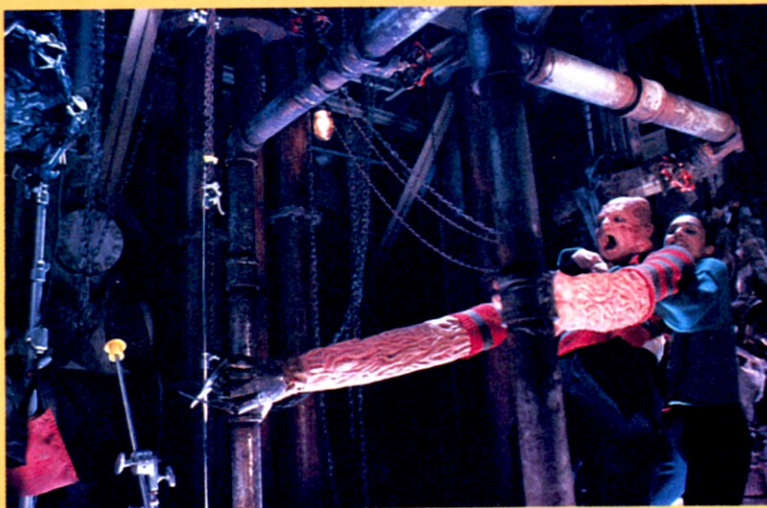
New Line appears to have learned from their mistakes. In

**Freddy's egghead, Buechler's effect for the climax, Krueger pulled back into the real world by his abused child.**



## WRITING FREDDY'S EPITAPH

**"I think the hardcore horror audience will always be disappointed, because Freddy will never again be the dark, scary villain of the original," said director Rachel Talalay. "Now you see him everywhere."**



**Krueger's climactic demise at the hands of his daughter, played by Lisa Zane, elongated dream arms—perfect for 3-D jolts—courtesy of makeup effects supervisor John Buechler.**

particular, they have abandoned trying to rush Part VI through production in order to meet a release date. THE FINAL NIGHTMARE wrapped principal photography at the end of January. Two years previously, V hadn't even begun production by that time, and it came out more than a month earlier.

The elaborate nature of Part VI still required a second unit (and even a third unit during the final week), but that was nothing compared to the four units shooting simultaneously throughout most of Part IV. "It wasn't anywhere near as berserk as the others," said Talalay. "Part of that had to do with the fact that there are fewer makeup effects in this one. There's less interest in makeup effects than there used to be. The audience has seen them all—wonderful stuff in hugely expensive movies. It's not something just in cult horror now; it's in INDIANA JONES and TOTAL RECALL. I went away from the makeup effects because we've stopped being able to bring anything new to it. If we don't have something like Debbie Cockroach in Part IV—which was

not only a great effect but a great sequence—then nobody's particularly interested in seeing somebody cut by Freddy's razors."

New Line still anticipates some ratings problems with VI but doesn't see the new NC-17 rating as a viable option, because teenagers make up such a large part of their audience. "I think the ratings board is much tougher," said Talalay. "We discussed whether we should make it a PG-13, rather than an R. We decided that was silly. By nature Freddy is an R. Parents are much more strict about ratings now. I haven't jumped all over the horror aspect. I've never been interested in being particularly graphic on this film. I think it's a fantasy. It's not about how much someone bleeds."

The continuing de-emphasis on Freddy Krueger's horrific impact inevitably disappoints fans of the original, but Talalay sees the trend as irreversible. "I think the hardcore horror audience will always be disappointed, because Freddy will never be that dark, scary villain of the original, that disgusting boogeyman with the burnt face. Now you see him every-

where, and your friend next door has the mask for Halloween. Hardcore fans will always hold the first one up as the seminal horror film. I can't compete with that. If I tried to make something to satisfy the hardcore fans, we'd have a much smaller audience. What I can do is try to be different and entertaining. Our audience grew a great deal with Part III, where we became more entertaining and less frightening. I'm more interested in that."

In line with maintaining the sequels' broader appeal, Talalay continues the trend of the series in emphasizing humor, not only with Freddy, but the rest of the cast as well. "I think our other characters have more humor," said Talalay. "I don't think that Freddy's wisecracks are necessarily as clever. Robert [Englund] and I worked on giving him a little extra childish glee he's never had before. He's really got a Bart Simpson element here, or he's like a Charles Addams bad child—the bad child you always wanted to be. He's having a great time torturing these kids."

Talay found the 3-D process used to film the sequel's ten-minute finale to be a headache for a number of reasons. "New Line had always talked about it," said Talalay of the idea of using 3-D in the series. "It just kept coming up. We tried to talk them out of it, but marketing was into it, and it was a big deal for selling it internationally, so we were strapped into it. I had to make sequences much simpler, which I didn't want to do, but when you spend so much time with your eyes focusing to figure out the 3-D, it doesn't matter that you don't have neat detail in the background. What's important is just getting the information across. I'm comfortable with that compromise now."

The film uses the old red-green 3-D process, modified by the Chandler group to provide a color image, though New Line had been prepared to go with black and white. "Red and green are Freddy's colors, so

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# WES CRAVEN

## ALIVE AND SHOCKING!

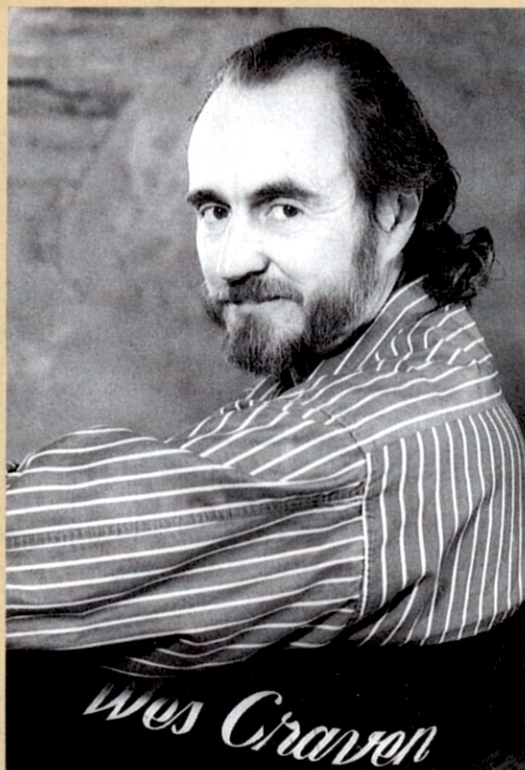
*The horror movie auteur who created Freddy Krueger, on continuing his work at the cutting edge of the horror genre.*

By Steve Biodrowski

The creator of *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* has a new horror film opening nationwide in October through Universal, titled *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS*, the second film of his two-picture deal with Alive Films (the first was 1989's *SHOCKER!*). Also in the works from Craven is a one-hour pilot for a proposed NBC television series called *NIGHTMARE CAFE*, starring Robert Englund.

"The trick with scary material is to break through the audience's complacency," said Craven. "The way you do that is by breaking implicit rules: 'Anybody civilized would not do that.' You have to do that in order to unsettle them; then you can frighten them, because they're off-guard. To get to that point, you have to cross the line; usually, the first line you cross is the ratings line."

Craven is contractually bound to deliver an R-rated film to Universal, but unlike New Line Cinema, Craven said he doesn't believe in softening his approach to horror to bring in a non-horror audience. "The two audiences are almost mutually exclusive, except in the long run," said Craven. "*A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* was made for a horror audience. It's an audience with a certain disposition. They're willing to look at things that are a lot more psychically challenging. They're a little bit more comfortable with crossing lines. I think that's why kids and minorities are more comfortable with horror films—because they're dealing much more with primal issues; in their own bodies, in confrontations with parents and authority figures, being placed in personal danger. These things are familiar to kids in school and people in ghettos; they're not familiar to adults ensconced in a comfortable house, marriage, or job. So the primary audience for horror seems to be either young or poor, but they're also essentially adven-



Craven, who wrote and directed *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* in 1985, has a new horror film opening in October.

turers, bold and brave. The rest of the audience follows along. A lot of people, I'm sure, watched *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* only after they'd heard about it or seen it written-up-somewhere."

Eschewing the fantasy dreamscape which has been Craven's trademark since *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*, *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS* returns to the more realistic, visceral horror the director pioneered in the early '70s with *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT*. The story follows a black teenager (newcomer Brandon Adams) who, desperate to help his poverty-stricken family, agrees to accompany some friends on a burglary attempt. The house they enter, however, turns out to be an inescapable maze of booby-traps and torture devices, presided

over by a dangerous madman (*TWIN PEAKS'* Everett McGill). The title refers to previous victims accumulated over the years and kept locked in the basement.

The simultaneous production of *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS* and *NIGHTMARE CAFE* is symptomatic of how busy Craven is keeping himself by moving back and forth between features and television. Craven describes the TV pilot, produced at MGM/UA, co-written with Thomas Baum (*CARNY*), and directed by Phillip Noyce (*DEAD CALM*), as a "concept about two people who inherit a cafe that's somewhere between life and death; they serve as moderators and participate in the stories. People in the real world come to experience their worst nightmare, their turning point, their comeuppance, or their breakthrough; they see their lives on television and disappear into the stories. The people in the cafe make bets on how it's going to come out and go into the story to influence it. Robert Englund plays three characters in the cafe, including the resident cynic."

Craven split with New Line Cinema over the direction of the *NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* series after the success of the original film in 1985, though Craven still enjoys a financial interest in the horror franchise. Craven said he has no regrets about continuing to work in the horror field, characterizing his work on *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS* as "a modern fable and myth." Noted Craven, "A film like this I'm very proud of and happy to do. Horror films generate our modern mythology. Freddy Krueger is like the Minotaur [of ancient Greece]. These modern mythological figures stand for psychological states, such as unexpressed fear, that don't get expression very much in modern culture. I think horror films are very viable if they're thought through that way—not just a bunch of knives flashing." □

# BATMAN II

## Director Tim Burton on the sequel and other pet projects.

By Alan Jones

In Paris earlier this year to promote the opening of **EDWARD SCISSORHANDS**, the fantasy closest to his heart, director Tim Burton, in an expansive mood, talked about his next film, **BATMAN II**, and a raft of future projects in development. "I'm not contractually obliged to direct **BATMAN II**," Burton confided. "But of all the films I've made, **BATMAN** is the one I've liked the least. Of course there are many aspects about it I'm happy with. But because it was such a big movie, and the first of its type for me, I felt it got away from the total vision I wanted."

Burton noted that his personality was much more evident in **PEE WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE** (1985), **BEETLEJUICE** (1988), and the semi-autobiographical **EDWARD SCISSORHANDS** (1990), lyrically retitled **EDWARD SILVERHANDS** in France. "Yet I love the **BATMAN** characters and imagery very much," said Burton. "I actually resisted making a sequel at first as you're setting yourself up for a far more difficult task than doing something original. Then I started to feel ideas, new images, what I thought I could do now with the characters, and how I could make it weirder, wilder and better. I'm very excited by it now."

Burton plans to avoid the pitfalls of most sequels by treating **BATMAN II** as if it wasn't a follow-up. "I just want to make a good movie. There's no point me worrying about the perception of what it is or isn't. Journalists ask me, 'Is it a proper sequel? Is it this, is it that?' My stock answer is, it's an original project."

A rumor Burton does want quashed is that Sam Hamm, the **BATMAN** scripter, was replaced on the sequel by Daniel Waters, the **HEATHERS** writer, because



Burton, back in Gotham City.

Hamm made the focus the romance between Bruce Wayne and Vicki Vale. "Not true at all," said Burton. Actually, Waters entered the picture because **HEATHERS'** producer Denise DiNovi is the president of Burton's own production company. "Dan is a good writer and he has a great take on the world," said Burton. "He can do something else with the sequel and explore the ideas that didn't quite get

there for me on **BATMAN**. The reason I wanted to make **BATMAN** was because I was fascinated by certain aspects of the story I just didn't get around to doing." Pushed for examples, Burton sighed, "I can't be specific. It's just an overall personality, a feeling. It's hard for me to describe this early on."

What Burton can be specific about is the casting so far. Along with Michael Keaton back in the title role, also firm are **THE GRIFTERS'** Annette Bening as Catwoman, Danny DeVito as the Penguin, with a black Robin a possibility. "Annette is a really exciting actress," said Burton. "I'm so glad we've got her. As for Danny, you'll see him in a way you've never seen before. I like Danny very much as a director and a person. He has integrity and one of the greatest twisted senses of humor I've ever come across. He's a real ally in **BATMAN II** and, along with everyone involved, he's interested in doing strong work. How the black Robin rumor started, I haven't a clue, but no decision has yet been made either way."

After keeping the Gotham City street set erected at London's Pinewood Studios for two years, Burton has had the whole expensive construction shifted to Los Angeles. The reason behind the move is a personal one. "I enjoyed working in England and I'd love to again," said Burton.



Michael Keaton returns in the role of the comic book crimefighter, with filming to begin in August in Los Angeles, for summer 1992 release by Warner Bros.

"But London became the subtext of the first picture. I'm making **BATMAN II** for myself and I want to infuse it with new ideas. Being back at Pinewood would seem like going over old territory in many ways. My decision has nothing to do with people because the **BATMAN** crew was wonderful. It has everything to do with shooting it someplace else so I can use American actors I like in secondary parts. A change is as good as a rest and I felt I needed a shift in scenery to add a necessary difference between the two."

Once **BATMAN II** is finished, Burton will turn his attention to a number of "exciting projects." There's the sequel **BEETLEJUICE IN LOVE** about which he said "[Writer] Warren Skaaren's death last winter was rather a shock, but there's nothing concrete to relate yet. It's way off as far as I'm concerned. I've been reading news reports about it myself to keep up to date with what's going on!"

There's **MAI, THE PSYCHIC GIRL**, optioned on Burton's behalf by Carolco Pictures, which he'll direct in 1992. Based on the popular Japanese comic book, the film is set in future Tokyo where world powers try to kidnap a gifted telekinetic medium for international espionage purposes. "The script hasn't even been written yet," said Burton. "Winona Ryder would be perfect for the lead role, but don't say anything because I haven't talked to her about it yet!" Burton is prepared to enter the Carolco mega-budget universe because, "I really like [company chief] Mario Kaszar. You read about these people and then find out they're completely different from

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# FAMILY DOG

**Burton teamed up with Steven Spielberg to executive produce the new CBS cartoon show.**

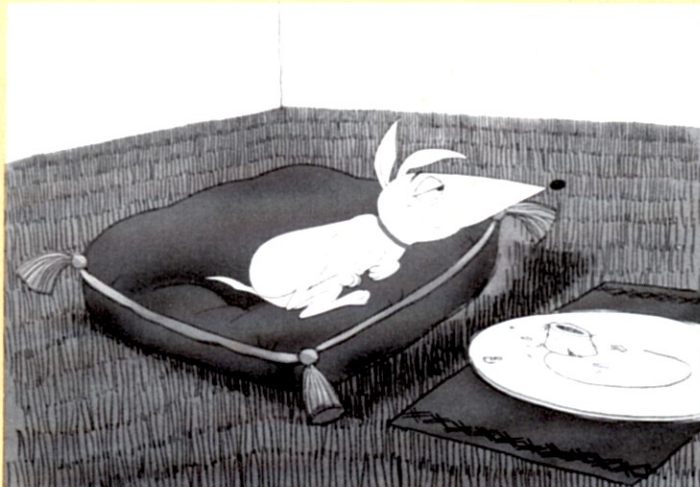
By Mark Dawidziak

Tim Burton, one of Hollywood's most unpredictable directors, returns to his first love, cartoon animation, as executive producer of *FAMILY DOG*, a CBS cartoon series set as a mid-season replacement, but not part of the network's Fall lineup. Burton had designed the character as a 1986 episode of Steven Spielberg's ill-fated *AMAZING STORIES* series, and responded to a pitch from CBS Entertainment president Jeff Sagansky to co-produce the new show with Spielberg, to fill the network's yen for a hit in *THE SIMPSONS* mold.

"The good thing about animation is that it's not something that takes all of your time," said Burton, who did not want a series to interfere with possible film assignments. "I'm sure Steven's doing other things."

In addition to Spielberg, whose Amblin Entertainment handles overall production chores, Burton splits the producing with Dennis Klein, a third executive producer actually in charge of writing the show. "We've all been trying to sort of not focus on the same thing," said Burton at a CBS press conference held to announce the series. "I'm more design-oriented, so that's where I focused . . . that's my expertise. It's not just a name-only thing for me. That's not interesting. Animation is a big sort of factory-like medium. Dennis does the scripts, and then it goes to storyboards. I comment on them, make notes, look at some of the animation, that sort of thing."

When a bottleneck developed in the churning out of the show's animation in Taiwan, CBS postponed its anticipated debut last March to what many thought would be a birth on the network's Fall lineup. "For television, you're always up against time," said Burton. "And animation is a much more time-consuming



Burton, a veteran of Disney animation, originally designed the dog for an episode of Spielberg's ill-fated *AMAZING STORIES* series in 1986, now available on video.

thing. [Production delays] are just part of the problem. I don't think there's too much way around that, truthfully."

Burton is all too familiar with the drawbacks of drawing. A trained animator, Burton started out at the Walt Disney Studios, where he worked on such films as *THE FOX AND THE HOUND*, and *THE BLACK CAULDRON*. "I liked all Disney stuff," Burton said when asked about his earliest influences. "I liked Dr. Seuss. I love to draw and I could never get a real job, so that's what I did. And the reason I got out of it was it just drove me crazy. It's just a very slow process. You have to be very, very patient. You have to have a lot of patience, and I don't have that."

A co-production of Warner Bros, Universal and Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, *FAMILY DOG* resisted the temptation to give a human voice to its central character. He barks and yips and whines (courtesy of voice actor Daniel Mann). His owners are the Binford's (Mom and Dad voices by Molly Cheek and Martin Mull). "He's just your generic dog," said Burton. "The dog is a great character. And that's really why I'm involved with it. Forget animation, live action, whatever.

It's a wonderful character. It is a dog's life. He's just 'the dog' (no name), your generic pet. He's just like a heart to me, like a heart come to life. His passion and what's important to him are very, very visceral."

Klein's inspiration in writing the series is the silent comedy of Buster Keaton, to bring out the flavor of a put-upon character who bounces back, one that's hopeful and endlessly optimistic. "Against great odds," said Burton. "I can certainly liken it to how I've felt at times, and just the struggle through life."

While Klein is trying to preserve the dark humor of the original *AMAZING STORIES* episode, he's also making sure

things don't get too bleak for their hapless hero. "You don't want to spend a half hour torturing the dog every week," said Burton. "Even though his life is difficult, you want to give it a little bit more shading than that."

Burton said he's ready for the inevitable comparisons with the original episode, and, of course *THE SIMPSONS*. "The good thing for me, and I think for all of us, is that we've just felt confident that it just stands on its own anyway, so it really doesn't matter. I don't care about the comparisons, really." □

Burton's input on the show will be from the visual, design standpoint, as the dog, "like a heart come to life," endures life's travails with eternal optimism.



# TERMINATOR

## James Cameron's double-barreled action is

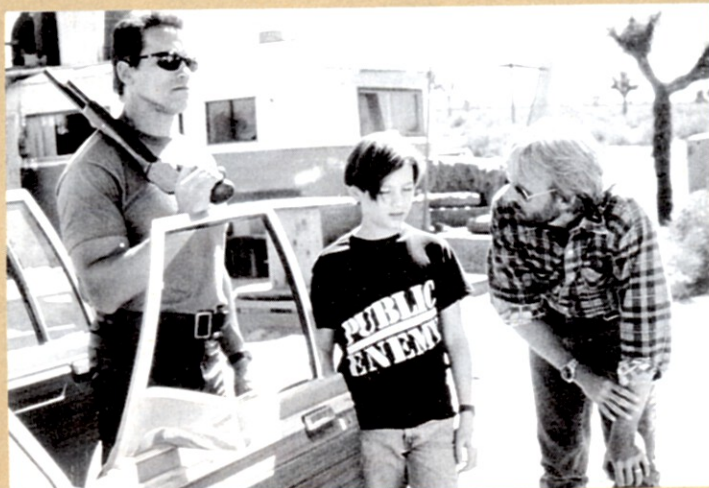
By Thomas Doherty

In 1984, for six and a half million dollars, director James Cameron and producer Gale Ann Hurd remodeled CONAN THE BARBARIAN klutz Arnold Schwarzenegger into an inner-directed cyborg sociopath of few words and expert marksmanship. Despite mutterings that Schwarzenegger was typecast as a mechanical man, THE TERMINATOR propelled the hyperactive Austrian out of loincloth limbo and into planetwide superstardom. For Cameron, then known only for the witty JAWS knock-off PIRANHA II: THE SPAWNING (1981), THE TERMINATOR was a passport into the science fiction pantheon. That he was no one-shot fluke was confirmed when ALIENS (1986) blew memories of Ridley Scott's original out the air shaft. Like the shotguns brandished by his heroes, Cameron shouldered the decade's only double-barreled bull's eyes—*succes d'estime* and boxoffice blockbusters.

Awaited with eagerness and trepidation by salivating legions, backed by a Pentagon-sized budget (a reported \$100 million), TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY thus has more riding on it than the quarterly earnings of Carolco and Tri-Star Pictures. After belly-flopping into THE ABYSS (1989), Cameron needed a hit to repair his damaged reputation as the last best hope of science fiction action adventure. The high stakes high concept is right on the money and worth every dime.

As in the original, time is of the essence. Sky Net, the nefarious computer system from 2029 A.D., sends a cyborg assassin back to the present to kill young John Connor (Edward Furlong), future rebel leader and species savior. In response, the elder Connor of the future sends his own cyborg (Schwarzenegger), back in time to be guardian angel to his younger self. Nary a second is wasted before a buck-naked Terminator is zapped into a Los Angeles that already looks post-thermonuclear.

“Cameron needed a hit to repair his damaged reputation as the last best hope of science fiction action adventure. The high stakes high concept is right on the money.”



Producer, director and co-author James Cameron, developing the dramatically crucial father-and-son relationship between Schwarzenegger and Edward Furlong.

To the wide-eyed appreciation of downward-glancing females, he strides into a biker's bar and requisitions leather attire and motorcycle wheels. His antisocial beginnings notwithstanding, this is “a kinder, gentler” Terminator programmed to protect and serve.

Sarah Connor (a Nautilus-revamped Linda Hamilton) is older, wiser, leaner and meaner. Little of the vulnerability of her earlier self—the California girl who doubted she had the right stuff to be “the mother of the future”—persists in the adult woman, driven, hard-edged and unhinged, by foreknowledge of the ultimate deadline. Chain-smoking, raving, and afflicted by nightmares of the big bang on August 29, 1997 (“Judgment Day”), Sarah is diagnosed a head case, straight-jacketed and locked up tight in a psych ward.

Playing the flashy new killer cyborg called the T-1000, Robert Patrick has a daunting task. The actor is slighter in build than Arnold (right, who isn't?), yet he has to be a credible threat to the tower of

power. Cameron likens the advanced model to a Porsche, sleek and custom made for killing, against Arnold's older Detroit class vehicle. In truth, the polymorphous T-1000 is a whole other species, more a supernatural being than a mechanical device. For pure adrenaline fear quotient, however, the classic model beats out the foreign import.

The heart of the sequel is the mother/child bond. The boy must rescue his mother and she must recapture her properly maternal attachment to her son. Inevitably, the drama moves towards the construction of a nuclear family unit, a Terminator-headed household in which Big Daddy, Sarah, and John lock, load and fire away together. When Sarah gazes upon the Terminator and John spending “quality time” together, she knows they've both found Mr. Right. Built around the cyborg's introduction to pre-adolescent slang and gesture, the surrogate father-and-son relationship is

surefire shtick—though the laugh lines try a little too hard to be catch phrases for a nation. Young Furlong is a good find—neither a precocious brat nor a cutesy Cub Scout.

Cameron's signature visual style is part tech *noir*, part heavy metal industry. Primary colors reflect the Cameron vision: industrial strength landscapes, awash in yellow explosions and hellish shading, bathed in reddish light and purple haze, all beheld from low angles and approached by Steadicam forward motion. For the grand finale, the whole crew tumbles into a cavernous smelting plant where catwalks, heavy machinery and cauldrons of molten metal beckon invitingly.

Set in relief against the tightly woven plot of the original, the sequel has a few lapses of coherence and credibility. The ever-adaptable T-1000 is like silver Jello, cascading across the screen and molding himself into whatever and whoever's handy—cutlery, floor tile, or L.A. cop. Even after wasting thousands of rounds of ammo on the unhurt form, no one asks the

# 2

## right on target.

obvious: how do you kill this mother?

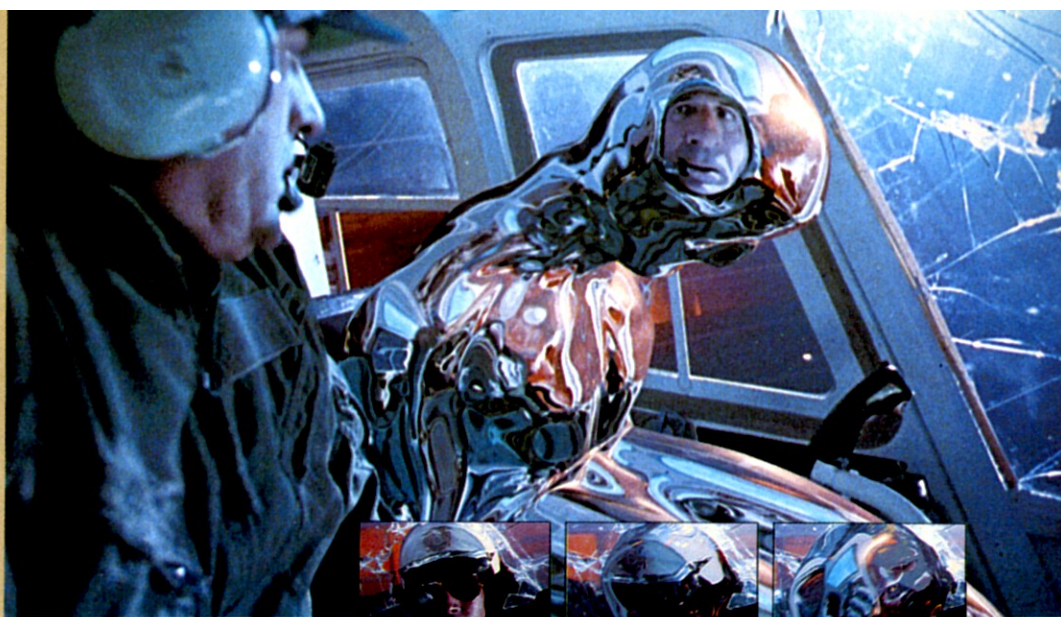
The time warp conceit is also metaphysically troubling. Remembering that the future is not set ("There is no fate but what we make for ourselves," Kyle had said), Sarah decides to sabotage Judgment Day. But if she succeeds and changes the future, won't she also delete the past—namely the Terminator? Contemplating all the temporal convolutions, young John Connor rightly says, "It's deep."

Perhaps in reaction to the widespread criticism of the ultra-violence in *TOTAL RECALL*, *TERMINATOR 2* racks up a relatively modest body count. Not that there isn't slice-and-dice bloodletting, bone-crunching violence, and enough automatic weapon fire for a dozen Steven Seagal movies.

The special effects are beyond state-of-the-art, virtually 2029 A.D. in caliber. Sarah's nuclear nightmare evokes chilling '50s newsreels. Like the water spout creature in *THE ABYSS*, the liquid form of the T-1000 is wondrous. Finally, as in the original, there are too-brief, tantalizing glimpses of the post-apocalyptic future-world and its violent machine/man wars. If there's a Part III, 2029 A.D. is the time to set it.

One big complaint: the in-your-face product endorsements for Pepsi mar the opening reels. You can almost imagine the T-1000 metamorphizing into a Pepsi vending machine. Otherwise, only memories of Cameron's *THE TERMINATOR* could cloud the obvious judgment on Cameron's *TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY*—the choicest science fiction action adventure since Cameron's *ALIENS*. □

Patrick in makeup designed by Stan Winston, stalking Hamilton at the climax, a seamless blend of live action and ILM's Computer Graphics Imaging technology.



The computer graphics of ILM, supervised by Dennis Muren, depict Robert Patrick as T-1000, taking the controls of a helicopter.



## EXPENSIVE GENIUS

*Cameron's production partner on the cost of making it better than "okay."*

By Dann Gire

According to Larry Kasanoff, director James Cameron's partner in Lightstorm Entertainment, the company formed to make *TERMINATOR 2* for Carolco Pictures, the film isn't really over budget. Kasanoff responded to media speculation that the film could turn out to be the most expensive ever made, with combined marketing and production costs reaching \$110 million.

"This is an expensive movie," admitted Kasanoff, who talked only in general terms and declined to cite specific numbers. "But what it is not is a movie that started out as a not-so-terribly expensive movie and became a terribly expensive movie. We planned meticulously. We sat down with Carolco and said, 'Well, here are all the things we're going to do, but it's going to cost this much money,' and Carolco said, 'Okay.' The amount of money we started with last May [reportedly \$60 million] is the same amount of money we spent.

"Then, the studio came to us and said, 'We'd really like to release this movie July 3rd.' Normally, you're supposed to have about two years to make a movie like this. We will have had fourteen months. We have thirteen weeks post-production when we should have nine months to a year. So, we've been doing post-production *during* regular production. We have three teams of editors, five effects companies, a first unit, a second

unit, and sometimes a splinter group, going around the clock. We are scheduled [to work] every hour right up to when this movie is released. We've been working every day, Saturdays, Sundays, for a year."

Will *TERMINATOR 2* be able to recoup its costs and make a profit? Kasanoff thought so. "There are two questions when it's all done," he said. "First, did everyone get their six bucks' worth? Second, did we all make money? If people feel they got their six bucks' worth, then we'll all make money. That's the gamble. The reason I don't mind talking about this budget is that it's not like we were having temper tantrums on the set and flying in caviar."

Like on the set of Disney's *MARRYING MAN*? "I'm not naming names," Kasanoff said. "Every penny is on the screen. It's not like we have parties with dancing girls and limousines for the grips. Wanton excess is bad in anything. It's counterproductive to business. But aggressive movie-making and breaking new ground is wonderful and daring. And that's what we're doing here. But that costs money and that's the gamble that everyone here is willing to take. I have to give Carolco a lot of credit. They have a lot of guts and they stand by what they believe in. No one wanted to make *TERMINATOR 2* just okay. They wanted to make it fantastical or they didn't want to make it." □

THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

# STAR TREK

## THE NEXT GENERATION

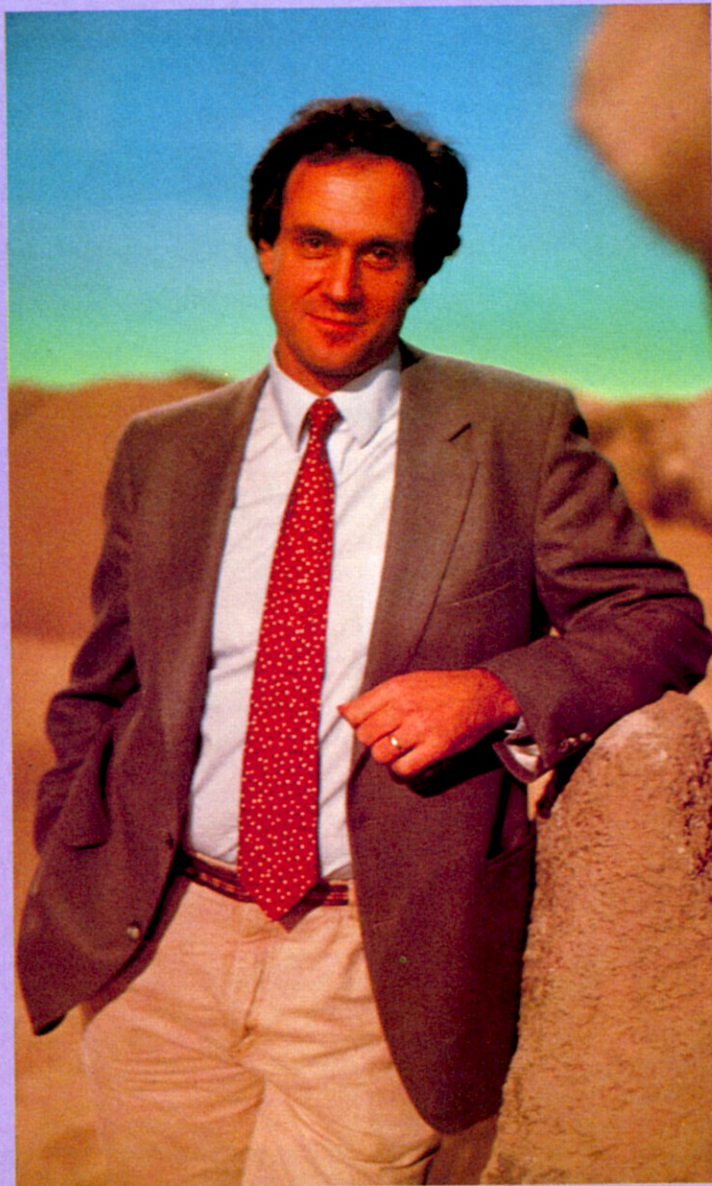
**For the fans of science fiction, in movies or television, this show is where it's at.**

*By Mark A. Altman*

As Gene Roddenberry plunged a sharp knife into the cake commemorating the shooting of *THE NEXT GENERATION*'s final fourth season episode, the series' one-hundredth show, he symbolically severed the umbilical cord linking the new *STAR TREK* to its predecessor, *TREK Classic*, as it's now fondly, if not reverently referred to.

After four seasons in space, the new *Enterprise* has proven to be a worthwhile investment for Paramount. With the largest budget of any one-hour dramatic series on television—costs are estimated between \$1.2 and \$1.6 million per show—the new *TREK* is now shown daily in most markets. Foreign sales have proven a financial windfall for cash-strapped Paramount, which has carefully marketed the show to distinguish it from the “star drek” often shopped around at television sales events like NAPTE and MIP-TV.

Unlike other first-run syndicated fare littering the television marketplace—*THE MUNSTERS TODAY*, *SUPER FORCE*, and *SMALL WONDER*—*TREK* has always prided itself on its first-class production values and network, if not near-feature, quality. Despite the inroads the show has made with wary fans, and its popu-



The great bird of the new galaxy, executive producer Rick Berman, on Stage 16's “Planet Hell,” the steward of series creator Gene Roddenberry's enduring legacy.

larity with viewers in general (*TREK*'s demographics among young male viewers rank with the best in the business), the industry as a whole has failed to recognize the series for its continually improving quality as a high caliber dramatic show, comparing favorably to such high-profile critical darlings as *L.A. LAW*, *THIRTY-SOMETHING*, and *TWIN PEAKS*, a show with which it shares many fans.

“*STAR TREK* gets a bad rap all the way down the line,” said director Les Landau, who helmed some of the most outstanding installments of the show's just-completed fourth season. “I think there's no other show on television that spends the money, takes the time and cares about what it does more than *STAR TREK*.”

The stigma always applied to science fiction on television has affected the perception of *STAR TREK*, as has the show's syndicated status, which means it's on different nights and times across the country. Though the new *STAR TREK* has won a Peabody Award and a number of Emmys in technical categories including production design, the show has not received the accolades it deserves for its top-notch writing or acting.

If *THE NEXT GENERATION* has not received the recognition it craves from peers in the industry, it has garnered something even more





**LeVar Burton as Geordi La Forge, metamorphosing into an alien creature in fourth season's "Identity Crisis," movie-quality production values employing ultra-violet lighting techniques. STAR TREK balances the excitement, wonder and imagination of science fiction with the kind of thoughtful exploration of concepts and ideas the genre is known for. Key to the show's success is the contribution of co-executive producer Michael Piller, whose supervision of its writing staff has made STAR TREK one of the finest dramatic hours on television.**

# THE NEXT GENERATION

## RICK BERMAN, PRODUCTION MOGUL

*Captaining the new Enterprise with the vision of Trek creator Gene Roddenberry.*

*By Mark Altman*

Gene Roddenberry created STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION. It was left to executive producer Rick Berman, who has been with the show since its first episode, to make it work. Berman has been a good steward, turning the new STAR TREK into a hit with fans and critics that could well eclipse the success of the original series. Berman has taken on Roddenberry's vision and made it his own. Charged with the day-to-day running of the STAR TREK universe, Berman's responsibilities encompass the entire spectrum of production chores, ranging from script supervision through post-production.

"I spend about thirty hours a week with the script and another thirty in the cutting room," said Berman. "I spot the music and sound effects for the show and I go to the sound effects dubs. I've also been very involved with all the various stages on the opticals." Berman works on as many as six different shows in one day, in various stages of production, including the screening of dailies on the episode filming on the stage.

Berman works in conjunction with executive producer Michael Piller, in charge of the show's writing staff, in refining the written material for shooting when a first draft teleplay is turned in. "I give very explicit notes from the first draft through the final draft," said Berman. "The writing areas I feel I'm strongest in would be the conceptual end of things, when we're coming up with story ideas, and the polishing—making the characters



Berman, arbiter of TREK's universe.

talk like themselves, making the science work logically and making the story believable and fit into the rules of our Universe. I will work with writers from the first draft to when it's put on the stage, and I will continue to make changes when it's on the stage, based on the director's and writer's requests."

Despite the decreased involvement of Roddenberry, Trek's aging creator, his presence is still felt on the show. "Gene's involvement is less this year," said Berman of the just completed fourth season. "And it was less last year than the year before. He still reads all the scripts and he still is on the stage pretty regularly. He sees final cuts of the shows and gives notes. He is still actively involved, but not to the same degree he was the first season or even the second season."

Roddenberry's presence is felt mainly in the rules he set up to write the show, rules that Berman has dutifully enforced. "Gene has come to trust me and because of that his involvement can be lessened without

Romulan Centurion Taibak (John Fleck) brainwashes Geordi to kill a Klingon governor in TREK's 24th century take on 1962's THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE.



Picard returns home to France in "Family," reunited with sister-in-law Marie (Samantha Eggar). Berman let the show break with format strictures.

any conflict," said Berman. "I take great pride in trying to protect Gene's universe, which I feel after four years is mine as well. I try to protect it and get involved with arguments and discussions with writers and directors who constantly want to bend the rules a little bit. We do bend the rules if it makes sense to bend them, but the most important thing is to let them straighten out again after you bend them."

Though Berman perpetuates Roddenberry's vision of the 24th century in shepherding THE NEXT GENERATION for Paramount, it's not necessarily a vision that Berman shares personally.

"This show has nothing to do with my vision of the future," said Berman. "I've become an expert in Gene Roddenberry's future. It's like learning a language. I'm fluent in it now and I can protect it and police it and nurture it in the way that Gene did. I don't think we're going to be living in a BLADE RUNNER society. I think we'll be living in a future which will be very similar to the world we're living in now. But for the purposes of our show, I believe Gene's vision of the 24th century is dramatically correct. It works for us." □

important to its continuing survival, acceptance by its fans and appointment by the original STAR TREK team as the legitimate heir to the universe the original show pioneered and charted. The fans have been won over by the series' blend of character moments, credible science fiction and stunning special effects, and the show's popularity has led to a unique synergy with the makers of the currently filming feature STAR TREK VI, the old generation passing the baton to the new.

"They [Paramount] want the movie and our show to have a symbiotic relationship," said THE NEXT GENERATION's executive producer and great bird of the new galaxy, Rick Berman. "They're interested in getting right what we have defined so there are no contradictions. We have a wonderful relationship with [TREK VI director] Nicholas Meyer and Leonard Nimoy and they have been terrific in coming to talk to us. There's much more of a family-like atmosphere than there was with STAR TREK V."

While TREK V virtually ignored the fledgling series when it went into production several years ago, and made the television actors feel uncomfortable when they visited the set, TREK VI has not only made use of the new series' sets during the show's summer hiatus to trim its inflated budget, but has also included myriad references to the new STAR TREK in its script, including a cameo by THE NEXT GENERATION's Michael Dorn, as Worf's great, great grandfather.

Berman sees the original STAR TREK in perspective. "Television has changed dramatically," he said. "Television in the '60s was quite different than it is now in the '90s. If one looked at some of the greatest dramatic efforts that were done in the '50s and '60s like PLAYHOUSE 90, those shows' production values, style of act-

**“The old STAR TREK had people who wore togas standing under arches. Ours is much more contemporary, more believable.”**

**— Producer Rick Berman —**



Fek'lh'r (Thad Lamey), the Klingon Devil, makeup by Michael Westmore, in "Devil's Due," a fourth season script recycled from TREK's aborted '70s TV revival.

ing and technical elements look almost silly in today's world. What was considered adventurous and groundbreaking 25 years ago is quite different now.

"Television has grown up a lot," said Berman. "I think our show is a lot more believable than the old show. That's due in large part to the creator of the old show, because it was [Gene] Roddenberry who was vehement when we created STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION that it had to be believable. That it would not deal with swords and sorcerers or be melodramatic. The old STAR TREK had people who wore togas standing under arches. Our STAR TREK is much more contemporary and believable."

In its just-completed fourth season, THE NEXT GENERATION has managed to improve on the quality of its impressive third season voyages. "Fourth

season was the best season so far," said director Landau. "The quality of the writing and the storylines have improved, climaxing in what was delivered to the audience this year."

"I think in some respects the show has gotten better," said Marina Sirtis, who plays Counselor Troi. "It's hard to be objective when you're in the show. The fans tend to say that the writing and the storylines have gotten better over the last four years, but I think that's possibly to do with the fact that we have more or less a fixed writing staff. In the first couple of seasons, the turnover was so immense that I don't think they could ever get a hook. They were here for ten minutes and then they were gone, which wasn't really long enough to establish any kind of continuity or character development in their scripts. The writing has improved because we have a stable of writers that we've had for a while."

Michael Piller, the show's executive producer who has run the new TREK's writing staff for the last two years and been an essential ingredient in the creative flowering of the series in its last two seasons, said of the fourth season, "I don't think there was one clinker in the whole group. Certainly last year we had some. Arguably you could say there were better shows last season, but week after week we maintained a much higher consistency of quality than we had, or most shows ever achieve."

"The show has gotten better and better each year," said Berman. "We all take it extremely seriously and that's the only way you can do it, because it's such hard work, and the second you start getting sloppy the audience sees it instantly. The fact that we have kept up the quality and integrity of the show and simultaneously the audience has gotten bigger is a wonderful achievement . . . and

## EPISODE GUIDE

Continuing what could become an annual tradition, Mark A. Altman provides a connoisseur's guide to the latest 26 episodes of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION's just completed fourth season, annotated with comments by the writers, producers, directors, and actors who have made the new STAR TREK one of the finest hours on television.

To catch up with Altman's look at THE NEXT GENERATION's first three years, check out our third season recap (see order form, page 60), including Altman's perceptive guide to the show's first 73 episodes. "You bruised a lot of egos with that one," said actor Jonathan Frakes. "But I loved it." With the show airing seven days a week in most major markets, Altman's guides are indispensable in unearthing those gems from the final frontier you may have missed.

### THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: PART TWO ★★★½

9/24/90. Written by: Michael Piller. Directed by: Cliff Bole.

Despite an outstanding teaser, some great character moments, a sensational Ron Jones score and a spectacular battle sequence in which the remnants of the destroyed Federation fleet are vividly brought to the screen by Rob Legato and his able visual effects team, the follow-up to one of the greatest episodes of TREK ever is a bummer. It is intimate when it should be epic—the conclusion takes place in Data's lab rather than in space where it belongs. It is filled with too much Trek-speak, that mumbo science lingo which all too often is used to jury-rig a writer's floundering fiction. And Cliff Bole's direction is overlit and thoroughly flat, though Bole continues to impress with his handling of the show's actors and character moments. Jonathan Frakes shines as Riker, forced to take command in Picard's absence, demonstrating he's got what it takes, both as an actor and as a character, to lead the show. The sparks between Frakes and Elizabeth Dennehy as antagonistic Borg expert Lt. Commander Shelby are as exciting as the space warfare.

"I was extremely pleased that I figured out how to defeat the Borg because, frankly, when I was writing it, I had no idea," said

**Picard gets cyberneticized into Locutus, the Borg's spokesman for their conquest of the Federation.**



it's wonderfully good luck as well."

David Livingston, one of the show's producers responsible for the physical production of the series, attributed STAR TREK's improving quality to the increasingly better scripts being supplied by the writing staff. "People always say that after four years shows calm down," said Livingston. "I feel it's running really smoothly, and I think it's a better show. I think that has to do with the writing and Rick [Berman]'s guidance in terms of the stories. Making sure the scripts are in the STAR TREK genre and mold is a really good system and has been working extremely well for the last two years. The scripts are getting better and because of this everyone rises to the occasion and it makes a big difference."

**T**he show's guidelines, surprisingly, have not changed much from first season when Gene Roddenberry first issued the "Trek Commandments." In the show's bible, Roddenberry laid down the rules for what THE NEXT GENERATION's characters could and could not do and these are the guidelines which Berman continues to enforce as the reigning power over the new STAR TREK. The Prime Directive to THE NEXT

Brent Spiner reprised his role as Lore, Data's evil twin, in "Brothers," Rick Berman's first script for the series.



## WORF UNMASKED!

*Under that makeup, actor Michael Dorn has endured four years of anonymity...and loves it.*

By Sue Uram

Underneath the two pounds of makeup used to create Worf, STAR TREK—THE NEXT GENERATION's Klingon Security Chief, shines Michael Dorn, the actor. Dorn is every bit the 6'5" character he portrays on the show and does not require a hint of padding under his Starfleet uniform. Dorn attributed his physical fitness to the gym on the lot at Paramount Studios which he uses at least three times a week.

Without his makeup, Dorn is a stunning man with a gentle disposition. Although his height posed a problem when he initially chose to become an actor, he found that prejudice against blacks at the time was even more difficult to overcome. Dorn noted that the use of a multi-racial crew on THE NEXT GENERATION does nothing to assuage the problem of racism in America today. "That's fiction," he said. "The racist stuff is going to be there and we are just mirroring it. Discouraging racism is not a function of this cast."

The pilot for the new STAR TREK was already a week into production in 1987 when Dorn was called in to read for the role of Worf. "For the first six months, playing Worf really changed me," said Dorn, whose hard work saw his character become one of the most important on the Enterprise bridge. "I really had to just go home and read and unwind and not talk to anyone to get out of character. Now I don't. I can click it on and off.

"I really don't prepare to play Worf," said Dorn. "When I go into work and they put on



Dorn, the man behind the mask.

that makeup, that's enough preparation right there. It is uncomfortable and painful. You automatically get into this edgy sort of character."

Dorn revealed that all principal characters on THE NEXT GENERATION signed contracts with Paramount to remain in their roles for six years. After that, Dorn envisions a series of STAR TREK movies while Paramount brings in a new cast for the television series. "A movie would be fine because it is not 26 episodes of that makeup," said Dorn, who is already looking forward to dodging his weekly ordeal. "I really love the character and I love the show, but there comes a point when it is time to move on. I see myself doing many other things, such as stage plays. And you cannot do that if you are tied up in THE NEXT GENERATION for twelve years." Dorn, however, didn't rule out continuing on the show past his commitment. "They would really have to make it worth my while!" he said.

Suggesting one possible career scenario, Dorn noted that if Worf were ever killed off in the series, he would not mind coming back in another role. "This time I would like to be less alien or perfectly human but with a quirk," said Dorn. "Something off-center like Geordi's vision visor. Or, I could play my own step-brother without the makeup as a human."

In launching the new STAR TREK, Paramount chose to cast largely unknown actors—numbering Dorn among them—to pump most of the show's \$1.5 million budget into production values. "They probably got more than they bargained for when they hired us because you have never seen a more tenacious bunch of actors in your life," laughed Dorn. "We have made the characters our own. Sure, they might replace me as Worf, and, after a while, a new Klingon would be accepted. But I do not think anyone could bring to the character what I have. It would have to be a different Klingon altogether."

Dorn said he recently sought out STAR TREK creator Gene Roddenberry to learn what opportunities lie beyond his six-year contract. "Roddenberry said the future of STAR TREK is really up to Paramount," recalled Dorn. "Gene said something very funny—that it could be a book-keeping decision. The powers that be at Paramount are not really artists. They are business people. Gene felt that STAR TREK survived this long due to the fact that it made a lot of money for them. Roddenberry just loans them the use of

STAR TREK and does not really know what they will do after the next two years. I am hoping for a movie. However, my perception is that, after six years, if Paramount does decide to continue the show on television, they may just employ a whole new cast, keeping the Enterprise as the main character, and continue on with the storylines." Dorn said the show has been profitable for Paramount.

Dorn shrugged off fan criticism of THE NEXT GENERATION. Dorn sees the show as entertainment and believes the fans take STAR TREK too seriously. "I am not inspired by STAR TREK," said Dorn. "When I want to get inspired, I read a book. Something real that has occurred inspires me." As an example, Dorn cited attending a policeman's benefit with Roddenberry to honor ten Medal of Valour winners. "I was inspired by that!" said Dorn. "People doing real things. Some movies inspire me to act. I saw THE FRESHMAN with Marlon Brando and I left the theatre thinking, 'This is why I got into acting.' Because I want to be that good. I am constantly striving."

But Dorn also credited fans for the success of the new STAR TREK. "The fans definitely got us on the air," he admitted. "Paramount would not have taken such a big chance had it not been for the continuing relationship with Roddenberry over the years. We probably would not have initially gotten [an order for] 26 episodes. We would not have made it without the built-in audience."

Dorn noted that he hasn't seen a direction to the show's just-completed fourth season. "It's anything goes," said Dorn. "Whatever the writers come up with." THE NEXT GENERATION has seen an unusually large turnover in its writing staff and Dorn isn't sure things have yet stabilized. "It's funny," said Dorn. "Peo-



Worf learned he had a son, Alexander (John Steuer), in "Reunion," fourth season's expansion of the Klingon's story in "The Emissary" and "Sins of the Father."

**"I am not inspired by STAR TREK. When I want to get inspired I read a book. Something real that has occurred is what inspires me."**

*- Actor Michael Dorn -*

ple come over on the set who I think are guests and they turn out to be the writers. They are isolated in another building from us."

Dorn feels the classic STAR TREK shows were ahead of their time because they placed women in positions of power. Despite the new show's 24th century setting, it hasn't been as much in the vanguard in promoting women's rights. "We are still dealing with 20th century television here," said Dorn. "What they are trying to make is something the public will like, and the public is not the 24th century audience."

Dorn considers himself a fan of STAR TREK, both old and new and as a Trekker noted that he would most like to see the reappearance of Elaan of Troyius, played by France Nuyen on the original show. "She was cute, interesting, and most of my relationships with women to date have been with women like her," said Dorn.

"Not mean, but powerful and assertive and anti-social. She would tell you off in a minute or throw a knife in your back [he laughed]. I am attracted to that type of woman who is almost the opposite of myself."

Dorn's most inspirational figure as a child was John Wayne. Later, he admired test pilot Chuck Yeager. "If I could choose a life to live, that would be it," said Dorn. "Dangerous, but that's the point." Dorn possesses a pilot's license but noted he can't find time during his five-day week of 14-16 hour days on the STAR TREK set to fly his Cessna 340. Why a two-engine plane? "Because," Dorn admitted, "I am basically scared. If I lose one engine, I want another one out there."

Dorn is looking forward to working on other projects besides STAR TREK. Among his career aspirations: "I would love to do a love scene with Kim Basinger!" Dorn said he actually reads all of his fan mail, mostly from policemen and kids. "Brent [Spiner, Data] gets the erotic, strange mail," noted Dorn. In his spare time, Dorn is trying to break in a music act, which is a tough area to "boldly go into," he quipped.

Dorn pegged his most embarrassing moment on STAR TREK to a mishap filming "Heart of Glory" in a scene that would be fun to see on a bloop reel. Worf leans his head back to demonstrate to Wesley a Klingon yell—during one take the actor's prosthetic false teeth fell out.

As for Worf not having a chair on the Bridge while his fellow actors lounge in comfort, Dorn feels it is one of the worst design decisions ever made, and an indication of how his character started life on the show as just an afterthought. Dorn doesn't expect he'll ever get to sit down on the show—to give Worf a chair would require reworking the whole set and that would be too expensive. □

Michael Piller. "I basically discovered the solution at the same time the characters did. It just occurred to me that the strength of the Borg was their interdependency and why not make their weakness that same interdependency. If you look at it as a two-hour movie, it's really quite effective."



Worf's "Jewish" foster parents, Sergey (Theodore Bikel) and Helena (Georgia Brown), in Ten Forward.

**"I always used to think you needed a little humiliation . . . or was it humility? Either would do."**

*—Robert Picard to his brother, Jean Luc*

#### FAMILY

★★★★

10/1/90. Written by Ronald Moore. Based in part on a premise by Susanne Lambdin & Bryan Stewart. Directed by Les Landau.

While the Enterprise is refurbished in spacedock, Worf's human foster parents, Sergey and Helena (Theodore Bikel & Georgia Brown), visit the ship, Wesley is given a recording made for him by his late father, Jack (Doug Eart), and the captain returns to Earth to visit his jealous brother Robert (Jeremy Kemp) in France, where Picard is driven to undergo a painful catharsis, purging the bitter memories of his Borg experience.

This show perfectly illustrates the types of risks the new STAR TREK has taken in its fourth season, an episode atypical of the series in every respect. Taking place on earth (and mostly on location), the episode is a character-driven piece featuring superb performances from an exceptional guest cast which also includes Samantha Eggart as Picard's sister-in-law. At times moving, at other times hysterical, only the Wesley sub-plot involving a holodeck recreation of his father falls flat, an idea borrowed from a spec script by Susanne Lambdin. The ending in which Picard's nephew watches the Enterprise leave orbit and dreams of his future as a starship captain is both powerful and evocative. This is as good as the show gets.

Said director Les Landau, a former assistant director on THE NEXT GENERATION, who debuted as a director first season, "That opening moment when Picard walks into the vineyard and sees his brother on his hands and knees picking grapes, and his brother doesn't even acknowledge him, gives me chills just thinking about it."

Noted executive producer Michael Piller, "One of the great

stories of this season is the emergence of Les Landau as a major television director. He has been one of the most consistent and remarkably successful people that I've had a chance to work with. Watching 'Family' was like seeing a John Ford movie."

**"Looks like we have ourselves a family reunion,"**

—Dr. Soong to Data and his brother

### BROTHERS

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10/8/90. Written by Rick Berman. Directed by Rob Bowman.

This is an episode that succeeds more as an exercise in technical proficiency than in storytelling, combining Brent Spiner with motion-control camerawork playing three roles as Data, his creator, aged Dr. Soong, and as Lore, Data's evil twin. The show is filled with great moments nonetheless, including an opening in which Data takes over the Enterprise and expels the bridge crew, the series' most exciting action sequence since terrorist Kyril Finn attempted to blow up the ship in third season's "The High Ground." The ending in which Lore escapes with Soong's computer chip, designed to make Data human, is unsatisfying and the episode lacks narrative closure as a result. Marks the return of Rob Bowman, the show's ablest director (21:2:32), his first episode since the second season. Spiner's *tour de force* performance is sensational.

"At one point, it was looking like we weren't going to be able to pull off Brent playing all three roles," said executive producer Rick Berman, who wrote the show, his first STAR TREK teleplay. "Keye Luke was one of the people we were thinking about [for Soong]. It would have been a lot less expensive to have done it with another actor but we ended up doing it with Brent and that made it a little more fun."



Brent Spiner in makeup as Data's creator, Dr. Soong, a role that almost went to the late Keye Luke.

**"Well, I'm sure there's nothing here to appeal to a young person... would you put that down please."**

—Picard to Jono, visiting his personal quarters.

### SUDDENLY HUMAN

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10/15/90. Teleplay by John Whelpley & Jeri Taylor. Story by Ralph Phillips. Directed by Gabriella Beaumont.

A human teenager, Jono (Chad Allen) is found aboard a damaged

GENERATION's writers in the "STAR TREK Writers and Directors Guide" is that its continuing characters "are the kind of people that the STAR TREK audience would like to be themselves. They are not perfect, but their flaws do not include falsehood, petty jealousies and the banal hypocrisies common in the 20th century. Regular characters all share a feeling of being part of a band of brothers and sisters."

As administered by Roddenberry, the rules all but strangled the show dramatically its first year. Under Berman, who gradually took over, Roddenberry's vision was made to work, a difficult format now revered and observed as the foundation of the show's amazing success. "You can't change the rules of the Universe every week," said story editor Larry Carroll. "Once you establish something in STAR TREK, then Mr. Berman makes sure that's the way it stays. I think he's been a real blessing for the show and has gotten it up and going. The first year was tough, but it also worked. It didn't fall apart and lose the fans. Rick [Berman] has an amazing mind for detail. He has an insistence and dedication to quality and consistency, which is very important when you're doing a science fiction show."

With Berman policing Roddenberry's universe better than he ever could, Roddenberry has been content to assume the role of a benign, non-interfering creator who set things in motion, and watches from on high. "We don't see as much of him as we would like," said Jonathan Frakes of Roddenberry's diminished presence on the show fourth season. Noted Frakes, who plays STAR TREK's first officer, Commander Riker, "I'm a big fan of his because he was so helpful to me in the beginning. He really took me under his arm and I'm sure

**"In the middle of third season Patrick Stewart came to me and said, 'I'm bored. You haven't given me anything interesting to do.'"**

— Producer Michael Piller —



La Forge (LeVar Burton), the pawn in a Romulan plot to split the Klingon/Federation alliance in "The Mind's Eye," producer David Livingston's directing debut.

helped me get this job. I had a wonderful conversation with him at the cutting of the 100th episode cake and he was warm and appreciative."

Equally appreciative is Paramount Pictures, which named a building on the lot after Roddenberry in recognition of his contribution to the studio. "The value of Gene's input in the conception of STAR TREK is unaccountable in the annals of television history," said director Landau. "He's a great man."

The key difference in the way Berman carries forth Roddenberry's vision of STAR TREK is that Berman not only knows the rules, he knows how to bend them. "There is an openness in Rick [Berman], more so than in the prior three seasons," said Landau. "He is very firm in what STAR TREK is and what it should represent. But he is receptive and open to the ideas and

thoughts of others. Ultimately, he makes the decisions and is the final arbiter, but he will listen. He will take good thoughts and sometimes veto bad thoughts, but ultimately, he will decide what is in the best interests of the show and what the audience wants to see. And I think his instincts and ideas and thoughts are more right-on than anybody else's."

Though widely regarded a success in its past two seasons, behind-the-scenes STAR TREK still grappled with its share of problems, including an unhappy captain third season named Jean-Luc Picard. Recalled Piller, "Patrick [Stewart] came to me in the middle of the season and said, 'I'm bored. You haven't given me anything interesting to do.' He was very unhappy about it. He was upset with the way Picard was being treated and he had every right to be. Third season we were basically just trying to keep our head above water, because we didn't have anything in development. I think if you look back at this fourth

season, I don't think Patrick's had one complaint. He's gotten to die, been Borgified, all kinds of things."

Though Piller takes into account input from TREK's acting ensemble, the cast is generally not a part of the show's scriptwriting process. "In general we don't consult with the actors prior to writing a script, unless we're going to do something like 'Family,'" said Piller. "That was such a conceptual story about the character of Picard that we felt it was important to bring Patrick [Stewart] into the loop, bouncing it off of him. He gave us some very good feedback. One of the things I must say about Patrick and Brent [Spiner, who plays Data], because I work a lot with them on the shows that they star in, is that they really contribute good notes and ideas. Of course, we don't always agree. But generally we try and find something

# THE NEXT GENERATION

## MICHAEL PILLER, SCRIPTMASTER

*Piller's writing staff makes the show one of television's most absorbing hours.*

*By Mark Altman*

Michael Piller is the steady hand on the rudder of THE NEXT GENERATION's writing staff. After joining the show early in its third season, Piller rose quickly to the rank of executive producer, reporting to executive producer Rick Berman, who runs the show for Paramount. Under Piller's guidance, STAR TREK scripts flowered in the show's third and just completed fourth year, offering consistently well-written character-oriented episodes that earned the new STAR TREK a fan following that rivals the fervor with which fans embraced the original show.

Perhaps Piller's greatest achievement was finding a formula to write exciting, dramatic shows within the strictures of series creator Gene Roddenberry's format guidelines which stymied intercharacter conflict among the Enterprise crew. "You can't have bickering," said Piller. "That's artificial and not what our show is about. It's artificial to try and manipulate people into conflict. People come from outside and create conflict for us as catalysts. One of the rules that I absolutely insist upon, which I think has changed the show in the last two years, is that those people who come from off the ship must be catalysts for our people to get into their personal conflicts. The show can't be given to the guest star and I don't think there are many shows where that's occurred. If it has, that's because we have a serious deficiency."

Piller fosters an open atmosphere in writing staff meetings which helps hone THE NEXT



The wizard of the word processor.

GENERATION's dramatic material to a sharp edge. "We have a process that we call 'breaking a story,'" said Piller. "We put all the writing staff in a room and whatever the writer came in with serves as only a starting point. Everybody sits down and we go to a board and break it down into acts and scenes. We try and see how the show is going to lay out. I tell everyone that in this room it is a safe environment

and that they are to speak out with whatever ideas they have, even if it's stupid or wrong, because it may spark an idea in someone else that leads us to the solution of a particular problem in a script."

Piller cited fourth season's 'Brothers,' Berman's first script for the series, as one that benefited from the staff process. "Lore demanded to come back into that show," said Piller about the episode which featured Brent Spiner as Data's evil twin, as well as the aged scientist who created them both. "I'm very much into Zen writing and I believe these things. It was something that had to happen to make the show work. The story that Rick wrote did not

Brent Spiner's "Brothers" triple play, the result of Piller's Zen writing outlook.



Riker (Jonathan Frakes) and son Ethan (Chris Demetral) in "Future Imperfect." Their best scene was a last-minute script fix by Piller's writing staff.

have Lore in it. Once Data goes back to see Dr. Soong, it's basically a chat. Without some jeopardy, it was going to be flat. The obvious thing was that we bring Lore back. It made it a must-watch episode. I knew from the moment we came up with it that Brent Spiner in three roles was going to make for an unforgettable episode."

Besides scripts generated in-house, Piller depends on story "pitches" from prospective writers. "We go for months without hearing good ideas," said Piller, who recalled the pitch for "Future Imperfect," one of the fourth season's best shows, which resulted in a staff position for writers David Carren and Larry Carroll. "Larry and David came in on one hot week and brought a couple of ideas," said Piller. "The first thing out of their mouth was, 'Riker wakes up and it's fifteen years in the future and he has a son.' I said, 'Sold.' They did it, and did a real good job on it."

Noted Piller, "Ideas just come in waves. For some reason everyone seemed to be coming in with an amnesia story. You saw three of them on the air this year. One we saved for next year. 'Future Imperfect' was one of our better amnesia stories. For a while everyone seemed to be coming in with stories about children. We had more children in the first twelve episodes than ever before. The only thing they didn't come in with was amnesiac children stories. It became a running gag around here." □

# THE NEXT GENERATION

## SHOOTING STAR TREK, BEHIND-THE-SCENES

*Producer David Livingston's Prime Directive is to turn out a mini-movie some 26 times a year.*

*By Mark Altman*

Mounting the production of **STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION** is no small task. With a budget for each episode equaling that of a small feature film, **STAR TREK**'s ambitious mix of state-of-the-art special effects, otherworldly sets and large ensemble of characters makes it one of the most difficult shows on television to produce. And though the medium has grown up a lot in the interim, the realities of television production remain much as they were 25 years ago when the original **STAR TREK** was rolling.

"They're still cardboard rocks," laughed David Livingston, who has served as the new **STAR TREK**'s line producer since its inception and was upped to the title of producer for its just completed fourth season. "But creative people on this show are so talented that they're able to make cardboard rocks so real, I'm sometimes blown away."

Livingston's responsibilities entail running the show on a day-to-day basis, excluding post-production, which is coordinated by co-producer Peter Lauritson. "I make sure that the show is done on schedule and on budget, and that all the shows at the end of the season come in on the money that Paramount allowed us to have," said Livingston. "I get involved in the set design and casting

extras, whether or not we can afford to do it at that point in the season, depending on how much money we have. Do we want to make it an eight day show or a seven day show? Do we want to go on location? I try to get involved in the script as early as possible to find out whether we'll be able to mount it. I give my notes from the production end so they can be incorporated into the next draft before the different departments get their hands on it and start going into vapor lock because it's so big.

We try to get it manageable before it's distributed to everyone."

If the writers have visions of extraordinary space battles and vast planetscapes, those ideas are soon dismissed by Livingston upon his initial review of the first draft teleplay. "Scripts can always be cut," said Livingston. "Obviously [writing staff chief] Michael [Piller] does not want to prevent the writers from having their imaginations flourish. If they think that they need a thousand people for something, they should write that, but it's going to come down to ten people pretty quickly. Generally, the writers have been very responsible in knowing how big the show is and what they can write to."

The bottom line demands of the show's budget often force the series to remain shipbound, reusing the standing sets of the



Patrick Stewart discusses the scene with Samantha Eggar, playing his sister-in-law Marie, during set-up at a French Manor house in Encino on "Family."

and give writing notes to Rick [Berman]—but that's not really my thing."

The budget for each year is determined by a review of the previous year's expenses. "We do a cost analysis at the end of each season and find out what we spent," said Livingston, who does the show's annual budget planning. "If Peter [Lauritson] only spends \$10,000 for opticals on a very simple show, the money he saves I get to put into construction and vice versa."

In budgeting each show, Livingston assesses the requirements of each script, which is tailored to meet the realities of a television budget. "I have to determine the practicality of the script," said Livingston. "I always get a copy of the first draft. I go to Rick [Berman] and tell him what my problems are; if there are too many sets, too many characters, too many



Picard (Patrick Stewart) acclimates Jono (Chad Allen) to human society with a shipboard game of racquetball.

Talarian ship and brought back to the Enterprise along with his comrades. Jono is responsive only to Picard's command authority and it falls to the captain to reacclimate the boy to human culture when his foster father and commander of the Talarian fleet, Ender (Sherman Howard), demands Jono's return or threatens war with the Federation. Deft writing touches by supervising producer Jeri Taylor help elevate this episode above its thoroughly unintriguing and tired premise. Some strong character moments with Picard placed in the role of surrogate father help make this one of the better ship shows of the season.

A subplot involving Jono's broken bones stirred some controversy among fans, according to executive producer Michael Piller, because it was misinterpreted in the context of child abuse. "We got some pretty angry letters on that show," he said. "The gist was, 'How can you let an abused child go back to people who are abusing him?' There are real parallels in today's world when parents fight over custody. I thought we made it clear that he [Jono] had a loving and protecting father in the alien. I am a very great believer in greys, that there are not always answers to the tough and difficult questions. It [savagery] was part of their culture and a normal loving thing that wasn't meant to imply child abuse."

"It's all perfectly logical to you, isn't it? The two of us roaming about the galaxy, the flagship of the Federation. No crew at all."

—Dr. Crusher to Picard

### REMEMBER ME ★★★

10/22/90. Written by Lee Sheldon. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Wesley's really gotten himself

Dr. Crusher (Gates McFadden) is trapped in a paranoid nightmare, a subplot dropped from "Family."







Cutting the 100th episode cake on the set of "Redemption" with Gene Roddenberry (l to r): Michael Dorn, Brent Spiner, Marina Sirtis, Jonathan Frakes, Rick Berman, Roddenberry, Michael Piller, Patrick Stewart, LeVar Burton and Gates McFadden.

Enterprise on Paramount's Stage 8. The budget constraints make the ratio of ship to planet shows higher on the new series than on the original STAR TREK. "We have to do ship shows for cost," said Livingston. "We try and balance that and save enough money to do the big shows like our season finale, 'Redemption,' in which we built the Klingon Great Hall again and had a couple of ships and a Klingon home. We try and keep the construction budget *parapasu* with the opticals budget. They're not the same money, but in terms of each year we try and allocate as much money to construction as we possibly can. To me the two most important parts of spending the money on the shows are the opticals and construction. It does cost a awful lot of money to build those sets, but the goal is not to have the show take place on the ship all the time."

Often sets are redressed and used in other episodes to help cut costs. "There was one set this year that we used three times in a row and I defy anyone to tell me that they were the same set because [production designer] Richard James did an amazing turnaround," said Livingston. "Marvin Rush lights them differently and they're dressed dif-

**“The cardboard rocks are still here, but the creative people on this show are so talented they're able to make them look like real.”**

*- Producer David Livingston -*

ferently by Jim Meese, and they're shot differently. The money we get from Paramount is all up there on the screen."

The difficulties arise when the show moves to Stage 16, affectionately referred to by the crew as "Planet Hell." On Paramount's barren soundstage alien worlds take shape. The stage rises hundreds of feet into the air and includes a pit which can be flooded when necessary. "The moment you go onto Planet Hell, it's a different ballgame," said director Winrich Kolbe. "It never looks the same. We usually use 75% of the stage, including the pit. It takes an endless amount of time to light and the moment you have to deal with smoke there is a problem because the smoke has to match from one shot to another. Ultimately, it's a lot of waiting around."

Noted Livingston, "It's called 'Planet Hell' because they're usually big swing sets

that aren't permanent, that you can turn around into something else. We have to work their bugs out. They're harder to light because they're weirder. Usually planet shows deal with aliens and action, stunts and explosions. It's more complicated shooting, so the long hours can really get arduous on that set."

The Borg set constructed for "Best of Both Worlds" was built over the pit on Stage 16 and was left standing for several episodes early fourth season. When the crew returned to Planet Hell for shooting on "Legacy" in which the crew navigates a labyrinthine maze of underground passageways, and "Future Imperfect" where Riker finds himself in what he thinks is a subterranean Romulan base, both were redressed versions of the Borg set left standing from the beginning of the season.

Once a teleplay is deemed acceptable and is selected for shooting, the script is given to Livingston for a pre-casting meeting with the show's casting director, Junie Lowry. Also attending are the writers who worked on the episode, if they're available, and executive producer Michael Piller. "We all come in with lists of who we think is appropriate," said Livingston. "We might

that satisfies everybody. If we can't, generally one side or the other wins. I won't say that Rick [Berman] and I always win, but we usually do what we feel comfortable with. For instance, there was a scene that Whoopi [Goldberg] had some particular problems with this season and we sat down and did a last minute rewrite that worked out pretty well."

Not all the actors are anxious to contribute to the writing process, however. "My basic theory of acting is you learn your lines and try not to bump into the furniture," said Sirtis. "I'm not a writer. I'm an actress. Once or twice a season I will meet for lunch with the writers and we'll discuss what I feel and what they think and then basically I let them do their job, and they let me do mine. I like that. I'm not qualified to write. I'm not a good writer. In those meetings I give them a few of my ideas and let them come up with stuff. We do a 43-minute movie every seven days, so if every actor was going to rewrite their part in the show we'd never get an episode aired."

**A**nd there's enough rewriting as it is. Berman recognizes good scripts as the key to STAR TREK's continued success, and makes a practice of improv-

Costume designer Bob Blackman provides a uniform with ample Klingon "klevage" for Wolf's "Redemption."



into a bind this time. He almost collapses a universe on his mom (as Simon Oakland said in *PSYCHO*, matricide is the toughest crime of all for a son...). In this show's absolutely inane premise, Dr. Crusher becomes trapped in a parallel universe in which the crew of the *Enterprise* is seemingly disappearing off the ship while the real crew desperately tries to rescue her before Wesley's warp bubble experiment turns deadly. The concept gets redeemed by some wonderful writing from short-lived producer Lee Sheldon, his one and only contribution to the show before passing through the script department's revolving door. Crusher's predicament is the ultimate paranoid fantasy in which everyone starts to disappear one by one and no one still around remembers them. By the time only Picard and the doctor remain on a ship built for one thousand people, it's delightful to see the way Sheldon has Picard make ludicrous justifications to explain why the *Enterprise* is now a tub for two. Starfleet budget cuts?

Making a return visit from *THE NEXT GENERATION*'s first season as the *deus ex machina* that sets things aright in time for next week's episode was "Where No One Has Gone Before's" fan fave, The Traveler (Eric Menyuk). "I think he was an afterthought," said executive producer Rick Berman. "That was a question of finding a way to resolve the story."

The concept for the episode was actually developed as a subplot for "Family." Noted executive producer Michael Piller, "While Picard was on Earth for that show, the people up on the ship were to be disappearing because of this wormhole. Rick [Berman] didn't feel there was room for both stories. It was his decision to do them as separate shows."



Data (Brent Spiner) is tricked into aiding gang leader Ishara Yar (Beth Toussaint), Tasha Yar's sister.

"I don't want to kill you Data... but I will."  
—Ishara Yar

#### LEGACY

★★★½

10/29/90. Written by Joe Menosky. Directed by Robert Scheerer.

They're still trying to make up for "Skin of Evil," the first season show that unceremoniously bumped-off series regular Tasha Yar (Denise Crosby). The Yar legacy continues to haunt the *Enterprise* crew when they come upon Tasha's sister, Ishara (Beth



Filming "Q-Pid" on location, one of the show's few excursions off the Paramount lot. Jonathan Frakes prepares to make merry on the sidelines of *TREK*'s take on Robin Hood, while John DeLancie observes from a stepladder, a godlike perch befitting Q.

talk about stunt casting, which is going for a name value, although we don't do a lot of that on this show. We discuss the prototypes for the characters based on the pre-casting session. We then have the casting sessions and there's usually two or three per episode, depending on callbacks, if we want to read someone over again. In the casting session Junie will bring in five or six people per character and they'll read with the director, Rick [Berman] and I, Junie and her assistant Ron [Surma]."

Lowry consults with Livingston on the offers that will be extended to guest cast. "We'll obviously try to get the people for as little money as possible," said Livingston. "But generally the caliber of people she brings in get top of the show, which is the top fee we will pay. Then we talk about scheduling and whether or not these people have to have prosthesis on their faces and whether or not we're going to have to put contact lenses on them. For instance, whenever we have a Betazoid we have to make sure the person can either wear contacts or doesn't know of any particular allergy so that we can fit them for contacts. I put a lot of pressure on Junie to cast early because she works on other shows too where they don't do all this stuff that we have to do. They go out and buy a suit and

comb their hair, but Michael Westmore [the show's makeup coordinator] sometimes needs a week lead-time. One of my jobs is to make sure we get these casting sessions done expeditiously."

During casting, Rick Berman and costume designer Bob Blackman begin consultations about wardrobe for the episode and a pre-production meeting is held. "We take whatever draft we have available and the writers and Michael Piller are there, along with Rick," said Livingston. "All the departments are represented and we go through each scene and we discuss everything. I run that meeting. We analyze all the production needs of that particular episode. The first budget go-around is done and the assistant director will schedule the show accordingly and tell all the different departments what day we're going to be on what stage."

At that point, the various departments spring into action. Production designer Richard James begins work on set design while Westmore works on sketches and molds for his makeup designs. Two days before principal photography begins, a second production meeting is held. "That meeting is run by the assistant director," said Livingston. "It confirms with everyone what we're

going to do and is a last-minute check of plans and looking at props. We have an opticals meeting, which Peter Lauritsen runs, which I sometimes go to, in which we go through all of the different opticals that are needed on that particular episode [to determine our costs]. How many blue screen cuts? How many burn-ins? What can we do second unit? What can we do as inserts?"

During the period preceding principal photography, Livingston visits the set where the current episode is being shot. Production manager Merri Howard on the set updates Livingston on the episode's progress, and during the course of the day Livingston spends time with production designer Richard James looking over set designs and construction for the next episode while also overseeing the hairstyling and makeup divisions on the show currently lensing.

"Each of the departments tries to sell its wares," said Livingston. "We don't necessarily do it in the big production meeting, because it takes up too much time. It's mainly from a creative standpoint, and Rick [Berman] has the final word. I act as the liaison and get all the stuff into him so he can decide yay or nay on all the design work. That's another one of my key functions, to act

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ing them even up to the moment a scene is about to go before the cameras. "There are times when I get script pages *after* I've shot the scene," said director Winrich Kolbe. "Most of the time they usually come the day preceding the shooting because the writers are quite well aware of our schedule. You always seem to be a day behind with scripts. Rick Berman is very meticulous. I don't think there are as many shows that I have worked on where so many corrections are coming through. At times that makes it difficult to keep track of what is happening. In most cases my staging is based on the content of the particular scene, so if they change the dialogue there's a good chance that the content of the scene will change and therefore my staging has to change. Those guys are working as hard on the scripts as I am on the set."

The actors, exhausted after a long day of shooting, often find themselves driving home with new pages to memorize for the next day, based on changes made in the shooting script by the writers. "The actors on this show are quite admirable," said Carroll. "We have the highest regard for them being consummate professionals because quite often they get pages at 8:30 at night with a 5:30 a.m. call, and they get to the set and know their lines and are ready to go. We try to avoid that, but it's often unavoidable."

In one instance, during "Future Imperfect," the fourth season show in which Riker wakes up fifteen years in the future and has a son, the shooting time on stage was running short which demanded that a new scene be inserted to bring the show up to its 43-minute running time. Writers Carroll and David Carren scrambled to write a new scene for the show. It was moving at a faster clip than anyone had anticipated," said Carroll. "We were literally over in Rick Berman's office at about 7:30 at night with Michael [Piller] try-

**“You always seem to be a day behind with scripts. There are times when I get the script pages after I've shot the scene.”**

**- Director Winrich Kolbe -**



Filming "Best of Both Worlds, Part II" on the Borg ship, an expensive Stage 16 set ingeniously redressed for use in both "Legacy" and "Future Imperfect."

ing to figure out what we were going to do so they could shoot it the next day. We came back over to our office and at 8:30 at night we were getting it finished up so they could shoot it the next day. It ended up being one of our favorite scenes in the episode between Riker and his son in the turbo lift, when he's talking about his relationship with his own father and how he felt that his father wasn't there when he needed him and how he doesn't want to abandon his own kid."

"And without that scene," said Carren, "that story doesn't really work."

"Things get rewritten a lot," Carroll said. "It's part of the process. We would believe if we said that sometimes it wasn't going to drive us nuts and we were going to go on and on with changes. But when you get down to the end of the line it usually is a better script."

Story editor Ron Moore, who returned to the show's fourth season for a second year, promoted to executive script consultant, pegged STAR TREK's improving quality to the extra time spent refining

the scripts. "We were able to get ahead on scripts this year," said Moore. "Last year time was short, we were off just ahead of the gun. We had a better handle on it going into the season this year, so we never really got to that scary point where you're writing things madly out on the stage."

Despite THE NEXT GENERATION's hefty production budget, writers still must face the realities of working for television. Fourth season story editor Larry Carroll termed the conforming of script aspirations to production realities "the M effect," named for the Fritz Lang horror movie starring Peter Lorre as a child molester, in which everything took place off-camera. "Our budgets are so tight we're always struggling to keep it under budget," said Carroll. "People come in here and pitch stories with fantastic things we

could never begin to produce. Michael Piller and Rick Berman are masters at keeping the show within totally practical limits, squeezing every bit of production value out of it."

Piller, in charge of the writing staff, doesn't mind the budget constraints. "My job is to find ways to tell interesting stories that are within our budget," said Piller. "If they took \$10,000 away, I'd find a way to make that work. After a point it becomes a law of diminishing returns. I think they're wonderful stories to be told that are intimate. The fact that we may have to do it for a tighter budget only allows me to do the shows which I love to do, which are character-oriented and deal with inner conflicts and not so much space stuff. When you get down to scenes where one person is breaking the heart of another you have something a writer can have a wonderful time with. They may not please the fans as much, but I don't think anybody was disappointed by the last half of the [fourth] season. I think it was better, and we spent less money."

Toussaint), on the late Tasha's warring homeworld where a Federation ship's emergency shuttle has crashed. The action-packed episode features a strong guest performance by Toussaint, though some of its contemporary gang allegory falls flat (COLORS, it ain't). The betrayal of the crew by Ishara is poignant and well-played, particularly the ambiguities seen in her character when Data bids Yar farewell as she beams down to her planet in the episode's coda.

"There's nothing as poignant as seeing the betrayal of an innocent, as Data is," said executive producer Michael Piller. "It's a show that has great entertainment value, but it doesn't stick out as one you'll always remember."

**"Not even a bite on the cheek for old times' sake?"**

**- K'Ehleyr to Worf**

#### REUNION

★★★★

11/5/90. Teleplay by Thomas Perry, Jo Perry, Ronald D. Moore & Brannon Braga. Story by Drew Deighan, Thomas Perry & Jo Perry. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

Another outstanding Klingon mini-epic in which K'Ehleyr (Suzie Plakson) returns to the Enterprise, surprising Worf by bringing his illegitimate son (first Kirk, now Worf—didn't they every hear of condoms in the 24th century?). K'Mpec (STAR TREK V's Charles Cooper), the head of the Klingon High Council, confides in Picard that he has been poisoned and that the fate of the Klingon/Federation alliance rests on Picard, who must decide whether Duras (Patrick Massett) or Gowron (Robert O'Reilly) will rule the Klingon empire. This knock-out follow-up to third season's "Sins of the Father" allows Worf to take vengeance against the member of the Klingon High Council, Duras, who had earlier disgraced him. Jonathan Frakes' sophomore outing as a director is impressive, as are the first-rate production values. The scene in which Worf discovers K'Ehleyr's slain body and takes vengeance against Duras is a gem.

"Rick's been throwing me nice episodes," said director Jonathan Frakes of his boss Rick Berman. "Three people got killed, there was murder and revenge. I've been lucky. Suzi [Plakson] was great. People are sorry she's dead. It's a character people really loved or hated because she was so big and shameless in her performance. I loved it."

**K'Ehleyr (La Bete's Suzi Plakson) surprises Worf (Michael Dorn) with news that she has borne him a son.**



"Some things improve with age, maybe your trombone playing will be one of them"

—Troji to Riker on his birthday

#### FUTURE IMPERFECT ★★★½

11/12/90. Written by J. Larry Carroll & David Bennett Carren. Directed by Les Landau.

After beaming down to a mysterious planet, amid peace negotiations with the Romulans, Riker awakens in sickbay sixteen years later, and learns he has a son, a concept that makes for one of the series' best teasers. What Riker fears could be a Romulan plot to discover the secret location of Outpost 23 turns out to be the fantasy of a lonely alien boy. The scenes between Riker and his "son" are wonderfully played and nicely staged by director Les Landau. The episode's clever double-switch is nicely set-up by Riker's suspicions that he is being duped on a Romulan holo-deck. Boasting the return of Minuet, Riker's Holodeck dalliance in first season's "11001001," as his wife, the memory detail in the virtual reality in which he finds himself brings him to the realization that he is being tricked.

"It was an opportunity for Jonathan [Frakes] to take charge of an episode," said director Les Landau. "It shows the dynamic quality of Riker. There was something universal about the theme of this alien little boy. The final moment, when Riker sees him and says, 'I will take you with me and you will always be a part of me,' goes back to the basics of what STAR TREK is all about. It's caring for the human condition, love for the universal being. It sounds esoteric and snobbish, but that's when STAR TREK is at its best."



Fifteen years in the future, Riker finds Picard an Admiral ambassador with Troi as his chief of staff.

#### FINAL MISSION ★★★

11/19/90. Teleplay by Kasey Arnold-Ince. Teleplay by Kasey Arnold-Ince & Jeri Taylor. Directed by Corey Allen.

Wil Wheaton's swan song as Wesley on STAR TREK is a somewhat cliched story, redeemed by strong writing, in which Picard and Wesley share their feelings for each other when their shuttlecraft crash-lands on a desert planet en route to a negotiating conference. When they attempt to gather water from a shielded fountain Picard is critically wounded and Wesley must take charge. Features magnificent desert location work in which Picard trogs across the sands in



## WHO IS GUINAN?

*Oscar-winner Whoopi Goldberg's enigmatic barmaid dispenses wisdom to the ship's crew.*

*By Mark Altman*

Despite numerous recurring performances in THE NEXT GENERATION since the beginning of second season, actress Whoopi Goldberg as Guinan, the bartender in Ten Forward, the Enterprise lounge, remains as mysterious as when she first joined the STAR TREK cast two years ago.

Since her tenure on the series began, Guinan has dispensed advice to the crew, consulted with Picard, sparred with Q, with whom she has an enigmatic previous relationship, flirted with Riker to help Wesley learn the lessons of love and even saved the Universe as we know it by convincing Picard to send the Enterprise back in time in "Yesterday's Enterprise," one of the best shows of the third season.

"That's a classic episode," said executive producer Michael Piller. "But it had so many holes in it, I'm not sure we ever plugged them all. It was as entertaining and unique a time travel show as you'll ever see but, hell, Picard sends five hundred people back to their death on the word of the bartender. Come on."

Despite the fact that Goldberg has created an extensive "backstory" for Guinan (actor-speak for creating the history of a fictional character based on the material in a script), she and the creative team are reluctant to elaborate on the future

**"Her backstory would blow you away. If they ever traced the history of Guinan it would be the most popular STAR TREK episode ever."**

— Director Les Landau —



Even ship's Counselor Deanna Troi (Marina Sirtis) goes to Guinan for advice, mourning the loss of her empathic powers in Ten Forward in "The Loss."

(or past) of her enigmatic character. "Whoopi is the perfect embodiment of what STAR TREK is," said series director Les Landau. "She's an all-listening, yet all-knowing representation of people in the future. Her backstory would blow you away. She has come to this point in time knowing where her character was 200 years ago, 100 years ago and 75 years ago, and what her relationship is compared to every character on the ship, including Picard. She is the most inventive and perfectionistic of actors. She

won't settle for okay, she only wants the best. Her character is as important to her in the context of STAR TREK as any role that she has or will ever appear in. If they ever did a story that traced the backstory of Guinan, it would probably be the most popular STAR TREK ever."

Ultimately it will be up to executive producer Rick Berman to decide if that will ever happen. "I think Whoopi feels like she's part of the family," said Berman, who believes that, despite the actress' recent Academy Award win, she will continue her missions aboard the Enterprise. "Whoopi and I have had long discussions about the character. We've tried to come up with some very unique and fascinating relationships between Guinan and Picard. We've toyed with them, and some of them are very wild. I don't know if we'll ever bring them to

fruition, but Whoopi and I talk about it, and I think we'll play with it a little bit."

What can be told is that while serving on the Stargazer, Picard became fascinated with Guinan's nameless race and requested her to operate the bar in Ten Forward. It was alluded to in "Q Who" that her race was scattered across the cosmos hundreds or even thousands of years ago by the Borg. Although Guinan dispenses advice freely, in much the same way as contemporary bartenders, you'll never find



Guinan on the Holodeck in the teaser for "Clues," joining Picard in his guise as fictional detective Dixon Hill, introduced first season by writer Tracy Torme.

pay-per-view boxing matches or alcohol on the Enterprise (No, "I'll have a Bud Lite!").

In lieu of the traditional brew, Guinan serves the Ferengi-concoction syntheol, which produces the same results as alcohol but with effects that can be shaken off at will. They'll never be hungover officers during a battle stations drill, to be sure.

Although Guinan's specific age is unknown, speculation has it that she is nearly 700 years old. And while she has provided wise counsel to many of the crew, Marina Sirtis, who plays Ship's Counselor Deanna Troi, doesn't fear that Whoopi's character is treading on her character's ground. "Guinan's there for those people who just need an ear to bend," said Sirtis. "I'm the professional for those people who need something more. She's the understanding friend."

Goldberg, who was a childhood fan of the original STAR TREK, has said that she was drawn to the new show because of her love for the original series in which she pointed to Nichelle Nichols' role as Uhura as a role model for equality among all races in the future.

"I started off being very upset because I never did any shows with Whoopi," said Landau. "But over the last season I've done several. She will not settle for second best. She is a perfectionist. There have been times when she has come up and whispered in my ear, 'Let me just try something different,' when what I have seen works, to my eye. Invariably she is right. That little nuance, that little touch, that little affectation makes all the difference in the world. After all, Guinan has been around for hundreds of years." □

Goldberg does the show out of fondness for the original STAR TREK and early role model Nichelle Nichols as Uhura.



Budget constraints on THE NEXT GENERATION call for writing what are termed "bottle shows," episodes set entirely on board the Enterprise to cut costs. "It won't have the spectacle of a battle with the Borg, but they still go the distance," said Carroll of the ship shows. "Even if they insist we have to save money on an episode, it doesn't mean the script is going to receive any less attention, probably more attention, because there's more writing on the script in a situation like that."

**E** episodes set entirely on board the Enterprise are particularly challenging for the show's directors. "You basically have four walls so you have to keep the people and the camera moving or it's going to be boring," said director Winrich Kolbe. "That's a challenge because it takes more time to light a moving shot. It's like a good stage play. If it's well-written people will stay with it. But you're continuously trying to figure out a new angle, even if it's only slightly different. You don't want to give the audience the same look every time. Unfortunately, when you're on the ship, you only have one and a half hallways. It's very difficult after a while to shoot them in a slightly different way. That's why I don't like to shoot a whole bunch of shows back to back. Every time I come back with a different approach."

The advantage of shooting "bottle shows," is that the sets are pre-lit. "The crew knows where the lights go," said Kolbe. "That goes rather quick. There are still some sets, like the conference room, which are difficult to light, although by now the crew has gotten used to that little curve and they don't have that reflection in the windows. The personnel quarters are also hard because they're so cramped. But everything else goes by the numbers, unless it requires a special lighting or optical effect."

Unlike feature films, where there is often the luxury of extensive rehearsals, STAR TREK, and television in gen-

search of shelter—all that's missing is a Maurice Jarre score. What doesn't work is a silly B-story in which the Enterprise must escort a garbage scow through an asteroid field. Dirgo, the slovenly and unkempt shuttle captain, is killed off too early, not giving Wesley the chance to prove his leadership.

"The idea had originally been to have Wesley and Picard crash on an ice planet," said supervising producer Jeri Taylor. "The nature of the planet changed because we felt we could make it a much more realistic dry planet. An ice planet would look hokey and fake."

"It was a little bit more expensive, because we went on location, and we had huge problems with the fountain," said executive producer Rick Berman. "It was a nightmare. We built it and it didn't work. Then we were going to do it optically, and that didn't work. That's one of my favorite episodes. It was poignant, the acting was excellent, and it was a terrific piece of drama."



Stranded on a desert planet, Picard and Wesley with shuttle pilot Captain Dirgo (SPACE 1999's Nick Tate).

"Spare me the inspirational anecdote, just accept my resignation."  
—Troi, after losing her powers

**THE LOSS** ★★½  
12/31/90. Teleplay by Hilary J. Bader, Alan J. Adler & Vanessa Greene. Story by Hilary J. Bader. Directed by Chip Chalmers.

A flawed, but at times engrossing episode in which Troi loses her empathetic powers due to a cloud of two-dimensional creatures which are leading the Enterprise into a deadly cosmic string fragment. The personal story of Troi's depression over being rendered powerless is a fascinating vehicle for Marina Sirtis which suffers by being coupled with an inane "mcguffin" involving creatures that are all too familiar, the floating cloud syndrome we've seen one too many times on THE NEXT GENERATION. In Gene Roddenberry's rose-colored universe where everyone gets along, it's hard to believe Troi turns into a superbitch. But it's fun. Writing staff intern Hilary Bader came up with the subplot of the cosmic string, a black hole-like gravitational abyss.

"We create conflict by infecting people with weird space anomalies and alien microbes," said executive producer Rick Berman. "I pushed for this episode a lot. It was fascinating to me that someone would lose one of their senses and be unable to explain it to others because they didn't have it in the

first place. It's as if you were the only sighted person in a colony of blind people and suddenly you lost your vision and they all said, 'So what.' I think Marina did a really good job."

Everybody complained that Troi's going to get her sight back, or rather, her insight back, by the end of the episode," recalled executive producer Michael Piller. "We toyed briefly with not giving it back to her."



Riker (Jonathan Frakes) shares a rare romantic moment with Troi (Marina Sirtis) in "The Loss."

"There may be a correlation between humor and sex. The need for more research is clearly indicated." —Data

#### DATA'S DAY

★★★

1/7/91. Teleplay by Harold Apter & Ronald D. Moore. Directed by Robert Wiemer.

A delightful day-in-the-life episode which follows Data around the ship as he prepares for Chief O'Brien's (Colm Meaney) upcoming wedding, highlighted by a brilliant scene in which Crusher teaches Data to dance (choreographed by Gates McFadden herself, who among other accomplishments, choreographed DREAMCHILD and LABYRINTH for the late Jim Henson). The subtle nuances of life aboard the Enterprise—Data assuming duty at the end of a shift—help make this episode a winner. Less engaging is an overarc subplot involving T'Pol, a Vulcan ambassador who turns out to be a Romulan spy, primarily due to a weak performance by Sierra Pecheur. More than compensating is Alan Scarfe as the deliciously menacing Romulan Admiral Mendak.

"This was a show I had encouraged us to do for quite a long time," said executive script consultant Ron Moore. "The idea of doing a day-in-the-life is a fairly common television convention. To do it on this show was very challenging. We've never done a show even remotely like it. [Writer] Harold Apter pitched it in the third season. At one point, it was going to be a Picard day-in-the-life, then a day-in-the-life of the ship. It went through a lot of changes until we came to the decision that Data was the perfect vehicle. He's the only one who's up 24 hours a day."

Executive producer Rick Berman insisted on giving the show a subplot to keep it from being merely a series of vignettes. "Rick believed that you cannot have a

ral, does not allow for a rehearsal period prior to shooting. "If I'm doing a play I have six weeks to rehearse," Kolbe said. "I don't have that luxury on STAR TREK. I have about six minutes—at most. The actors are working their own hours on the preceding shows. Normally the first time we get together is when we have our call at 7 o'clock in the morning and everyone will be on the set and we'll talk about it. If I feel the need to talk to Patrick or Jonathan or someone about a particular item, I will do that. It's the same as when I talk to the director of photography prior to doing my prep."

"What the directors do is set up the shot and find something interesting to do with the camera or in the scene action-wise rather than acting-wise because the actors know their characters pretty well," said Sirtis. "The directors that know us, know just to let us go on with our work, unless they come up with a brilliant idea, and some of them do. I'm not saying it doesn't happen. But on a day-to-day basis on the bridge, for example—the bridge is the bridge—it's basically the same thing happening every episode."

**T**he desire among the STAR TREK directors to continue to advance their craft and utilize the newest in advanced film technology often taxes the budget as well as the varied resources of TREK's production team, often bringing them into conflict with Livingston, who has to keep a tight reign on expensive shows where aspirations often exceed budget limitations.

"The directors know coming in that we have a pretty good budget on this show," said Livingston. "They know that they are going to get a lot of goodies. If they're willing to fight for it, great. Let them come in and scream and pound on my desk, 'I want this set.' When I shot my episode, I did.

**“If I’m doing a play I have six weeks to rehearse. I don’t have that kind of luxury on STAR TREK. I have about six minutes.”**

— Director Winrich Kolbe —



Ender (Sherman Howard), the Talarian stepfather of Jono (Chad Allen), a human boy, raising the issues of broken families in fourth season's "Suddenly Human."

Sometimes, though, you just have to say, 'no.' [Production designer] Richard James will have designed something like the Taj Mahal and I use my red pencil, which is a cliché and a joke, and I start scratching it all up and saying, 'We can't have this and this,' and out of that Richard sometimes comes up with something that's even more inspired. Budget limitations and schedule force everyone's creativity to go up one notch. They have to really figure out how to make something cheaper and in so doing often it's better. It's easy to spend tens of millions of dollars. I think we've seen enough feature films which have been horrible where they've just thrown caution to the wind and not really thought about what they're doing and spent a lot of money. Working on episodic television forces you to be more creative."

"They want a movie and

they want it for \$1.2 million," said Kolbe, who directed two episodes fourth season. "Nothing ever goes smooth. They're very few shows where everything seems to come together. 'Identity Crisis' [in which Geordi transforms into a monster] was going fine until we hit Stage 16 [dubbed 'Planet Hell'] and then it was seventeen-hour days. I know that they were quite worried about us going over, and it ended up going over by half a day."

Said Livingston of Kolbe, "He drives you a little crazy because his shots take a long time. He pushes it to the max and takes every second that we'll allow him to get and then probably more. He's excellent with the camera and has a wonderful eye. He was a pointman in Vietnam and that's good training for a director. God bless him. He's technically a master and does his homework."

One unfortunate result of a budget crunch on THE NEXT GENERATION, almost repeated fourth season, is the use

of a clips compilation episode, often suggested by the studio to save money late in the season. TREK ended second season with "Shades of Gray" in which Riker is fatally injured and must combat a deadly virus with his recollections of previous shows.

"The studio asked us for a clip show to help them out with financial problems and to make sure we balanced our budget, since we spent a lot of money on some of our shows," said Piller of the fourth season's budget woes. "Rick and I discussed it. We both hate clip shows. We think they're insulting to the audience. They tune in and then you create this false jeopardy and then flashback as their memory goes to the wonderful times they've had before they got trapped in the elevator. That's bullshit. We just absolutely said if there's any way to avoid this, can we come up with an episode that will

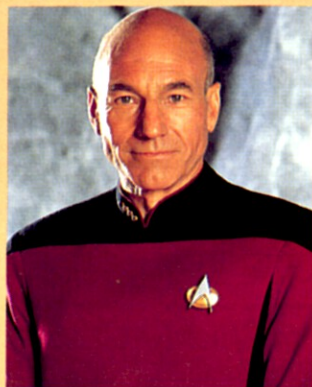
# THE NEXT GENERATION

## A HAVEN FOR FIRST-TIME DIRECTORS?

*Executive producer Rick Berman earned a reputation for giving talent a break.*

*By Mark Altman*

Among the decisions made by executive producer Rick Berman, who runs THE NEXT GENERATION for Paramount, is the roster of directors who will work on the show. In its first four seasons under Berman, STAR TREK has gained a reputation for giving a break to numerous first-time directors, members of TREK's creative visual team including actor Patrick Stewart,



Stewart, the latest actor-turned-director, helmed "In Theory."

visual effects supervisor Rob Legato, producer David Livingston, and actor Jonathan Frakes, who has shot three episodes for the series thus far. "I went to Berman last year and said I'd like to do a show," recalled Frakes. "He told me I'd have to go to school, I spent about three hundred hours in the editing room and on the dubbing stage, learning about that side of directing. I naturally looked over the shoulders of all our regular directors and took some seminars and read textbooks. Finally I didn't go away and Rick was kind enough to give me [third season's] 'The Offspring.' I was thrilled because I got a Data show and those always work."

Berman has used first-timers to supplement the work of the series' veteran directors, including regulars like Rob Bowman, David Carson, Cliff Bole, Gabriella Beaumont and Corey Allen. Berman said one of his goals on STAR TREK is to find new directing candidates among minorities and women. "I'm very interested in finding directors who are black or Latin who are qualified and interested in doing the show,"

said Berman. Some of the directing wanna-be's are already getting in line.

"I think Gates [McFadden] is trying to get a show next year," said Marina Sirtis, who plays Troi. "[Brent Spiner]'s probably going to direct next year also. It actually makes it easier, since they know the turf, and the show too. We like the people that we work with so that immediately makes you want to work harder for them and make their time as a direc-

tor smoother. Basically after four years of doing this show most directors know that we know our characters better than anyone else and they let us do our job. If it's a new director [unfamiliar with the show] it usually takes longer, because they're sort of feeling their way. Directors who have done more than one episode or people who know the show basically do it faster. That's good because we have enough sixteen and seventeen hour days and we want to get out of there."

Though proud of his reputation for giving new talent a break, Berman is begin-

Les Landau, an assistant director Berman promoted to director first season, filming John Vickery as Hagan, the mentally burnt Betazoid of "Night Terrors."



K'Ehleyr (Suzi Plakson) and Worf's son Alexander (John Steuer) beam aboard in "Reunion," the second show to be helmed by tyro director Jonathan Frakes.

ning to have reservations about his open-door policy. "A couple of years ago, for good or bad, I got the reputation as a producer who was willing to give people who I thought were ready to direct their first shot, which is something that doesn't happen very often in this town," said Berman. "The first year we had Tom Benko, one of our editors, and the second year Les Landau, who was one of our assistant directors. I got this reputation and all of a sudden there were more. There was Jonathan [Frakes], [cinematographer] Marvin [Rush], David [Livingston], Rob [Legato], [assistant director] Chip [Chalmers] and, of course, Jonathan wanting to do more, and Les wanting to do more.

People immediately assume that if they do well the next season they'll get another one. Suddenly I am drowning in requests. I cannot produce a television show where 60% of the shows are being directed by first and second time directors. At some point I'm going to have to start saying 'No,' which is not easy. But I will have to pull back and say they have had a shot and now other people have to get their shots. There are also some professional directors out there who need some work, too." □



Actor Brent Spiner did most of his own tap-dancing with choreographer Gates McFadden in "Data's Day."

show that has no jeopardy or drama on STAR TREK," said executive producer Michael Piller. "I agreed with him, otherwise all you're doing is a scrapbook."

**"You're a fool, Picard. History will look at you and say, 'This man was a fool.'"**

—Captain Maxwell to Picard.

#### THE WOUNDED ★★

1/28/91. Teleplay by Jeri Taylor. Story by Stuart Charno, Sara Charno & Cy Chermak. Directed by Chip Chalmers.

A dark, fatalistic episode for TREK in which a rogue starship captain launches a one-man war against an alien race with which the Federation has recently negotiated a peace treaty. Bob Gunton ("Sweeney Todd") as Captain Maxwell is one of the few actors able to quietly convey the power and strength of a starship captain in only a few scenes as a guest star. Gunton is wonderful in this surprising, thought-provoking story, which boasts a powerful ending in which Picard is forced to bring in Maxwell despite the fact that he realizes the rogue officer is right and that the Cardassians are rearming to protect a fragile peace. A nicely designed makeup by Michael Westmore for the aliens serves well, and lip-service is even paid to the fact that a Federation weakened by the Borg would be unable to sustain a new war. Colm Meaney as transporter Chief O'Brien comes into his own in a stirring conclusion (Rick Berman's idea), singing an old English drinking song with Gunton, a ditty heard in THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING.

"It was sort of *Heart of Darkness* with the rogue captain out of control," said writer/producer Jeri Taylor. "If you're trained to look at people as the enemy, it's hard to be their friend. The material was epic

Transporter Chief O'Brien (Colm Meaney) drinks in Ten Forward with Daro (Time Winters), a Cardassian.



# THE NEXT GENERATION

## THE SPECIAL EFFECTS OF STAR TREK

*Effects supervisor Rob Legato on the economy, speed and ease of video digital compositing.*

By Mitchell Rubinstein

According to STAR TREK producer David Livingston, "The Enterprise is just plastic on a stick." It falls to the show's visual effects coordinators, Robert Legato and Dan Curry, to make the dazzling 24th century visions of the show's writers come to life, in as little time and for as little money as possible.

Four years in space have been good to Legato, who has engineered thousands of effects for the show since its pilot episode and has directed two of its installments. Noted Legato, "It's surprising how much gets done in the compressed time frame of television."

The work for a particular episode begins when the script lands on Curry or Legato's desk. This could be a week before the start of filming or it could be only a few days. The teleplay is immediately dissected in terms of the effects required and the resources necessary to do them "That's a process of hours, not days," said Legato. "There's usually a 'main gag' in the show: some peculiar thing you have to address." Depending on how much over budget the episode is at this point, effects are cut, or reworked to make them cheaper.

Legato supervises the "live" effects filmed during the epi-

**"In no time you've run through all the shots and they're all dull because they don't move. The ILM method never panned out."**

— Effects Chief Rob Legato —



Legato (c) plans a motion-control shot using the small two-foot model of the Enterprise, in conference with effects associates Gary Hutzel (l) and Walter Hart.

sode's seven or eight days of scheduled principal photography. Editors then take two weeks to assemble the footage. Legato gets an advance copy of the edited show or waits for the "on-line," the final cut approved by the producers. At this stage, the show is considered "locked." Said Legato, "Then we see what the real work is going to be. Up to that point, it's in a state of flux." If the show is under, they might add three or

four new ship shots or they might add more cuts to the bluescreen.

Effects post-production involves from five to nine days of motion-control shooting—the ship shots—and second unit photography for other types of effects. An additional five or six days are scheduled for compositing the various effects elements into finished shots. Unlike feature films, the effects elements in STAR TREK are not combined optically on film, but are composited digitally on videotape, a time and cost saver. All footage is transferred directly to one-inch digital videotape, known as "DI." With the flexibility of video editing, infinite combinations of elements can be put together easily in nearly any arrangement imaginable, and previewed. The reels of finished effects are turned over to the associate producer with specific instructions on how

they are to be insert edited into the video on-line, making the show complete.

Unlike film compositing in which footage is combined optically on another piece of film, losing quality with each successive generation, the video compositing of STAR TREK suffers no such image degradation. "It's not a cumbersome system like it is on film," said Legato, referring to the relative ease of tape pro-





The Enterprise heads back to Earth in "The Best of Both Worlds, Part II," shot, composited and edited on videotape. Inset: The new, easier to shoot, four-foot Enterprise miniature introduced third season.

cessing. "Once you make a transfer to DI, the image is pristine, and usually cleaner than on film. There is no loss of image quality on any generation after that. You could layer three or a thousand [images] and it never changes."

The digital compositing system used on *THE NEXT GENERATION* is a significant advance over the analog tape systems of several years ago. "On analog tape, every generation loses quality," said Legato. "It would be less sharp, the contrast would be off; after four or five generations it would look like shit." In addition, since the digital process is controlled via computer, many corrections which would be difficult or impossible on film are now just a few strokes on a keyboard.

The original concept to achieve the show's ship effects cost effectively was to use a library of Enterprise stock footage filmed by Industrial Light and Magic. But the lack of variety in the ILM shots and the fact that they were all stationary, made the idea so limiting that it has essentially been abandoned. "The ILM method never really panned out," said Legato. "In no time you've run through all the shots and they're all dull, because they

don't move. We generally shoot new things for each show."

With more than 350 Enterprise shots now in the show's effects library, Legato finds that he can occasionally reuse some of their own material. "After a while you have so many different variations that you can do it." Legato's preferred method is to take an old Enterprise shot from a previous episode and simply put a new ship in it. The new ship is simply filmed using the same motion-control moves as the old shot and the two are then combined, resulting in a new sequence.

Heavy effects shows like "Best of Both Worlds" place extra demands on Legato and his crew in visualizing space battles that are costly in both time and money. "You end up working late nights," said Legato, who sees the Borg two-parter as a good example of what special effects are supposed to be. "The effects support the story and advance it and keep it exciting, and match the live action."

Choreographing the action of multiple ships requires that the motions of each element be worked out separately and filmed separately, under the command of the motion-con-

trol system. "If it's a battle sequence that involves three or four ships, the work involved goes up in geometric proportion," said Legato. "For ten seconds of screen time, you've shot four or five days." Legato cited the shot of the three Martian probes that attack the Borg ship in "Best of Both Worlds, Part II." "That's a big shot. It has Mars in it, it has the starfield, the three ships blowing up, and the Borg ship flying towards us and away."

Though imaginatively designed by Richard James, Legato found the Borg's cube-shaped ship hard to shoot. "That, for me, is quite ugly and difficult to light," said Legato. "You're hampered by the fact that when you put the ship in a particular lighting condition, it looks terrible. You then have to redesign and rechoreograph the shot to put it in its best light."

Shots of the Enterprise are now filmed primarily with a new four-foot model built for the show's third season. Legato prefers the new ship to both the six-foot and two-foot models which were constructed for "Encounter at Farpoint," the series' pilot episode. "I didn't like the six-footer," said Legato. "I didn't agree with the idea of making the model that big origi-

cost the same but at least be a story with some integrity. Finally, the studio agreed to let us try and we came up with "The Drumhead" [a look at McCarthyism in the 24th century] which is obviously a very inexpensive episode without any special effects, but it gave us a chance to tell a very important story."

**I**n prepping the fourth season in the summer of 1990, Berman, who had championed the series through stormy seas during its early shake-down period, did not have a detailed personal agenda for the show's new season. "We did not really set a fourth season goal," said Berman. "We knew which characters we wanted to focus on and what kind of stories we wanted to do in very broad strokes. Our ultimate goal was to do good episodes as opposed to working on a seasonal arc of some sort."

If Piller were to fault the fourth season, he said it would be the year's first half in which the series relied on what Piller termed "a few gimmick shows." Noted Piller, "I think every series needs those. They were really good adventures and had good hooks—things that are easily described in *TV Guide*. I look at the series as a whole and I would say the entertainment value of the first half of the season was very

STAR TREK fan Jean Simmons starred as Admiral Sattie in "The Drumhead."



in nature, which is always fun to do, yet at its core was a very personal story between [Maxwell] and Picard; two strong and able officers teed-off against each other."

**"My reputation as a litigator, not to mention my immortal soul, is in serious jeopardy."**  
—Picard

**DEVILS DUE** ★★ 1/2

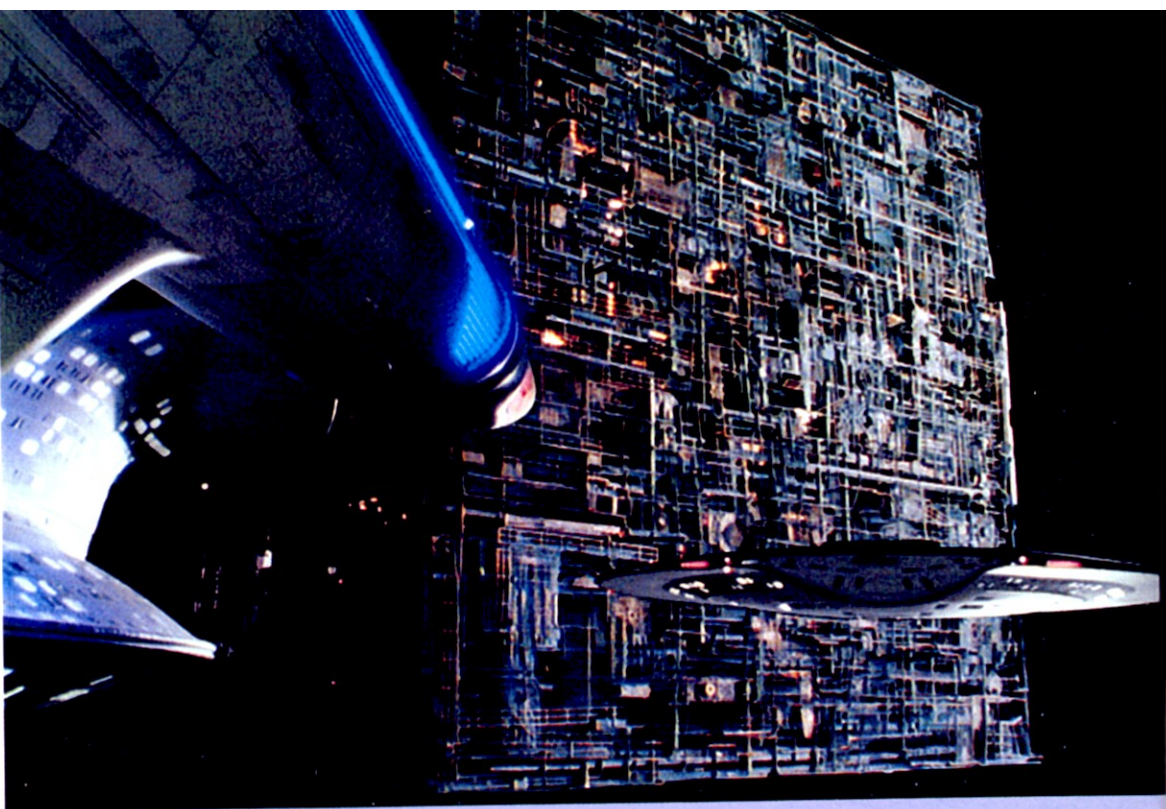
2/4/91. Teleplay by Philip Lazechnik. Written by Philip Lazechnik and William Douglas Lansford. Directed by Tom Benko.

Reworked from an original premise for the series' aborted '70s TV revival, this episode plays like a 1966 Enterprise voyage in which Kirk, er, Picard must argue in court that a woman, Ardra (Marta Dubois), claiming to be the devil, is really a charlatan, in order to nullify a contract she has on the planet Ventex and the Enterprise. Ironically, this traditional TREK down memory lane was the highest rated show of the new series since its pilot, "Encounter at Farpoint." Whether that's due to the show's special effects-laden trailer, a sultry female protagonist (in early drafts, a male) or as producer David Livingston speculated, "the fact there was no basketball game on that night," we can only guess. Its enjoyably riotous moments were contributed by a myriad of writers including Lee Sheldon, Melinda Snodgrass, Larry Carroll, David Carren, and Michael Piller, in addition to those credited.



Data with Ardra (Marta Dubois), the devil incarnate found by Picard to be rather "obvious and vulgar."

"It was a story that had been put into development third season when we had no stories and no scripts in development," said executive producer Michael Piller. "We owned the script, which I had been told was decent. Because I had no product I told [story editor] Melinda Snodgrass to rewrite it and stick our character's names in. That didn't work at all, and we started talking about how we could change it to better suit our show. We never succeeded in breaking it, and during the hiatus I gave it to Philip Lazechnik who is a writer for Paramount on WINGS and a real TREK fan. He turned it inside out and made it a delightful show. It was too funny, though. People felt it was playing for laughs. I loved that draft of the script, but not everybody did. It was put into rewrites by approximately fifteen people between Phil's script and the final draft, which I took, changing



The battle bridge saucer section of the Enterprise detaches (close-up, below) to rescue Picard from the Borg ship in Legato's video effects for "Best of Both Worlds, Part II," filmed with the large, unwieldy six-foot model, the only one rigged to detach.

inally. It made shooting difficult because you couldn't get back far enough. And there was no detail on it. Detail was drawn on in pencil. You can't get close to it, so there's no reason to have it that large."

In addition, the lighting system on the six-foot Enterprise was very cumbersome, requiring the stringing of wiring through the model, taking an hour for each setup. Gary Hutzel, a member of Legato's team, came up with an onboard neon transformer for the new four-foot model, which allows the whole lighting scheme to be changed by flipping a few switches. Legato was forced to dig out the six-footer again to film "Best of Both Worlds, Part II," because only the large model is equipped with a detachable saucer for separation sequences. Noted Legato, "That proved to us what a pain that model really was to shoot."

Legato said that he is sometimes asked to shoot effects he knows won't work. A case in point was fourth season's "Night Terrors," one of the show's most inane episodes, in which Counselor Troi is "terrorized" by an imagined flight among the clouds, accomplished

by suspending actress Marina Sirtis on wires in front of a nebulous background.

"I have never seen flying done well," said Legato. "It always looks like what it is. So right off the bat you're fighting a device that doesn't work." But even if the effect could have been made to look better, Legato argued that making it believably frightening was all but impossible. "It's hard to get something terror oriented when you're flying," said Legato. "Flying isn't a nightmarish thing. Flying is kind of pleasant. I don't think it was very successful."

In addition to directing numerous second unit effects sequences for STAR TREK, Legato has also helmed two of its episodes: third season's



"Menage a Troi," his directing debut and fourth season's "The Nth Degree," a show that featured elaborate laser sequences filmed live. Legato said he likes directing. "It's more fun when you're the one in charge," he said.

Directorial ambitions were what brought Legato to STAR TREK in the first place. "When I signed to do the show, my intention was to direct," said Legato, who got into effects as

an entre to directing TV commercials. "You have to start somewhere. I learned the business that way." Legato feels his directorial point of view boosts the quality of his STAR TREK effects work. "The reason the ship is doing this or that is for an emotional effect, not just a special effect," said Legato. "If you add a thread of logic or story point in any of the shots you do, it is a little more interesting to watch." □

Special visual effects co-supervisor Rob Legato (r), with associate Erik Nash, reviewing a shot of the Enterprise at the motion-control playback terminal.



high. But I don't think there was much substance to it. The second half of the season, I think, is sterling television. We have really reached the best television has to offer this year."

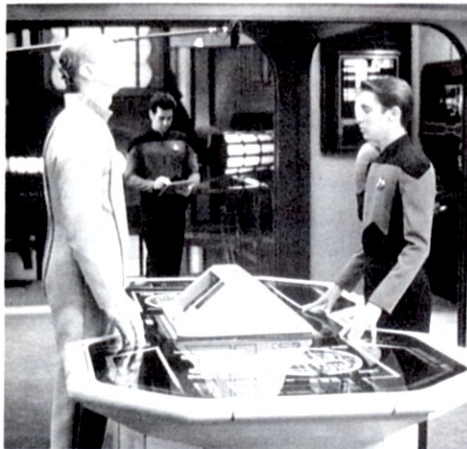
One goal that was set for the writing staff fourth season was to come up with a send-off for Wil Wheaton as Wesley Crusher. During the summer production hiatus, Wheaton had asked to leave the show, abandoning his role as the Enterprise's teenaged ensign. Though Wheaton's decision no doubt pleased many fans who objected to having a brat on the Enterprise bridge, especially one with the ability to seemingly solve any crisis, Wheaton's move came at a time when his character had quietly begun to gain some acceptance.

"They really missed the boat with Wesley," said freelance writer and STAR TREK fan Marc Scott Zicree, who sold the story idea for "First Contact" fourth season. "In those early shows when Wesley was fifteen and going out and playing ball with the blonde aliens and falling in the bushes, they were writing him like he was five years old. He should be looking to get laid instead of playing ball. Then he falls in love with that girl [in second season's 'The Dauphin'] and they share chocolate mousse—give me a break. I really wanted to write an episode where he got to act more like a human being."

Indeed, bad writing—owing mostly to series creator Gene Roddenberry's very concept of the character—may have had as much to do with Wheaton's career move as the beckoning feature film opportunities that were offered as explanation. With the show on notice, Wheaton stuck around for the season's first nine episodes, until the writing team figured out a way to beam him off the ship in "Final Mission." Noted Piller, "There had been a lot of very bad feelings around here about the way Tasha Yar was

**“They really missed the boat with Wesley, writing him like he was five years old. He should be looking to get laid, not playing ball.”**

— Writer Marc Scott Zicree —



Before beaming off the show fourth season, Wesley (Wil Wheaton) saved his mom in "Remember Me," with the help of first season's The Traveler (Eric Menyuk).

sent off [first season]. We were determined to give Wesley a send-off that had real value, something that stayed with you. We finally decided that he would go to the [Starfleet] Academy, which I think was Gene [Roddenberry]'s idea. That was the most reasonable and easiest idea, which also keeps him alive for future episodes."

**E**ncores by characters from STAR TREK's past became a major theme for the show's fourth year. The just-completed 1990-91 season boasted the return of a number of characters from THE NEXT GENERATION's first few years on the air. "We informally decided to go back into our own universe and bring back some of the more interesting characters that were created over the first three years," said Piller. "We have created a whole universe here and we have a tendency to go on to the next new discovery which is great, but at the same time I think we have created some very interesting prob-

lems and characters which should be revisited. We're not serialized by any means, but we like the idea of doing revisits and that's why you saw so many of the characters from prior seasons make a comeback this year."

Not only were there the persistent references to the Daystrom Institute, the Tholian Wars and the like, but even to such obscurities as the Nannites Piller introduced in his script to "Evoution" the previous year, and the ability of the ship's main deflector dish to channel energy as established in "Best of Both Worlds."

"I like continuity and those references," said Moore. "The danger is you don't want to serialize the show. This isn't L.A. LAW or something where you can carry stories over week to week. A first-time viewer who sits down and watches 'Reunion' [Moore's sequel to third season's 'Sins of the Father'] will have to work and follow it pretty closely, but he can do it. I think you can watch that show and not know what happened before because I don't think it's important. You know that Worf has a problem. It's nice to know the back story, but all you need to know is 'something happened.'"

One of the most talked-about returns of the season was that of Worf's one-time lover, K'Ehleyr, played by Suzi Plakson (who also starred as the Vulcan Dr. Solar in second season's "The Schizoid Man"). In "Reunion," Worf finds out he is a father when he is reunited with K'Ehleyr, introduced in second season's "The Emissary."

"All the comments were, 'I loved the show, but why did you have to kill off K'Ehleyr?'" said Moore, who co-wrote the episode. "I think it works just fine. If that wasn't there you'd be missing a big part of the story where Worf has to embrace his son in the end, and finally gets to go after [Klingon schemer] Duras."

But don't blame Moore for

the male devil into a female devil for fun, and putting back as much of Phil's original script as I could get by with. It was very off for our show, and I thought its origins showed, but ultimately it was a funny little show and a nice part of our mix."

**"We are not invaders, we are explorers." —Picard**

**CLUES** ★★½

11/11/91. Teleplay by Bruce D. Arthurs & Joe Menosky. Story by Bruce D. Arthurs. Directed by Les Landau.

In this mildly entertaining installment the crew of the Enterprise slowly begins to discover that they have "lost" 24 hours since encountering a mysterious wormhole in space. When Data begins to exhibit suspicious signs, the intricacies of his tightly-plotted conspiracy to aid an alien race begin to unravel. Director Les Landau's stylized direction rescues the pedestrian teleplay, which opens on a Dixon Hill adventure in which Guinan and Picard embark on a new mystery on the holodeck. Unfortunately, that proves more fascinating than the story which follows.

"It was a very difficult episode to do," said director Les Landau. "It's a story that repeats itself three or four times as it unfolds. Directorially it was the most difficult assignment I've had on STAR TREK and probably one of the most rewarding. To show different points in time and flashbacks within flashbacks was very difficult. I tried to create a style that was very fluid and singular in its point of view until the very end when we came back to normal time, when the camerawork and editing became very cutty."

"I really loved that show," said executive producer Michael Piller. "It's one of my favorites of the year. It was a perfectly realized classic mystery put together into a STAR TREK format which came together into a very satisfying episode. It was written by a writer [Bruce D. Arthurs] we hired off a spec script, who is a mailman in Phoenix, Arizona. He gave us a very good story, but the script needed some work, mostly restructuring caused by the departure of Wil Wheaton, and a major dialogue polish. Joe Menosky came in during the hiatus and did the polish and did such a good job that I thought he deserved to be on staff."

**Guinan (Whoopi Goldberg) joins Picard (Patrick Stewart) on the Holodeck for a Dixon Hill adventure.**



"This morning I was the leader of the universe as I knew it. This afternoon I am only a voice in a chorus, but I think it was a good day."

—Durken to spaceman Picard

"I'll call you the next time I pass through your star system."

—Riker to Lanel, an infatuated alien

#### FIRST CONTACT ★★★½

2/18/91. Teleplay by David Russell Bailey, David Bischoff, Joe Menosky, Ronald D. Moore & Michael Piller. Story by Marc Scott Zicree. Directed by Cliff Bole.

An outstanding episode in which the Enterprise must make "first contact" with an alien world on the verge of attaining warp technology. When Riker is injured on the planet's surface, Picard must accelerate his plans to retrieve his wounded first officer. Told from the point-of-view of the alien culture, this is an impressive episode showcasing THE NEXT GENERATION at its best and most ambitious in a story that alludes to the origin of the Klingon/Federation conflict of the original series. Wonderful performances by MAX HEADROOM's George Coe as planet leader Durken, Carolyn Seymour (Mirasta) and Michael Ensign (Krola) support an intriguing and original script, as does a show-stealing cameo by CHEERS' Bebe Neuwirth, whose response to a close encounter with Riker is that she "has always wanted to have sex with an alien."

Noted writer Marc Scott Zicree, who sold the show's concept to Piller during a story pitch, "The final storyline was mainly Piller's, in terms of the basic thrust of it. A lot of the twists and turns came from outlines that I wrote. My input was the basic concept that the head of the warp project was a female scientist who would be more advanced than the rest of her people, and the notion that the Enterprise fails in its mission, and the scientist elects to go with the Enterprise."



Carolyn Seymour as alien scientist Mirasta Yale, leaving her world for the Federation in "First Contact."

"Every time you're touching the engine, you're touching me? Real professional."

—Leah Brahm to Geordi about his Holodeck recreation

#### GALAXY'S CHILD ★★★

3/11/91. Teleplay by Maurice Hurley. Story by Thomas Katozian. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

Former producer Maurice Hur-



## THE MAKING OF "FAMILY"

*The Enterprise crew returns to Earth to find their roots in the series' most unique episode.*

By Mark Altman

"Family," the follow-up show to "The Best of Both Worlds," the ground-breaking epic two-parter that spanned third and fourth seasons, turned out to be the most unique episode of STAR TREK ever, and one of the best. "The biggest decision of the hiatus was to extend the storyline of Picard's kidnapping into a third episode," said executive producer Michael Piller. "That was very controversial. There were a lot of people who were very hesitant about doing a threesome and going down to Earth. People felt it was not STAR TREK. I have friends who are fans of the show who called and said 'I hope you never do that again.' But, for my money, 'Family' was one of the best pieces of film we did this year. It was also consistently the lowest rated in both original airings and reruns, so maybe my friend was right—if you're not out in space, you're not hitting the audience where they want to be hit."

The idea for "Family" originated with Piller, who felt that Picard needed to return home to Earth for some nurturing after the ordeal of being turned into one of the cybernetic Borg. "He thought of it as an opportunity to do something we've never done before," said story editor Ron Moore, who got the assignment to write the episode. "He wanted to do a story about the captain sort of finding himself again. It was a very atypical episode for THE NEXT GENERATION. I think



Jeremy Kemp, Samantha Eggar and David Tristan Birkin as Picard's brother, sister-in-law and nephew.

it's the only episode of STAR TREK—old, new or movies—that never went to the bridge of the Enterprise once in the entire show."

Piller ended the second part of "The Best of Both Worlds" with the suggestion that Picard was not quite okay, even though his request to turn the show into a three-parter had been denied. But Piller didn't give up on the idea of a follow-up. "The normal objections were that we were not serialized," said Piller, about why the story wasn't extended to a third part. "We try to tell stories that can be told in one hour and that's what we do very well. When I got to the end of Part II, we made the decision not to extend it and I called up [executive producer] Rick [Berman] and said, 'Hey, listen, next week Picard can be fine, but for a show that prides itself on its realistic approach to story-

telling, how can you have a guy who's basically been raped be fine next week?' There's a story in a man like Picard, who's lost control, delving into the psychological crisis that a man like that has to face. Finally, I was persuasive enough to talk Gene [Roddenberry] and Rick into taking the chance. I think everybody is glad we did."

At first Piller was not able to champion "Family" without making concessions to Berman to conform the idea to the traditional STAR TREK formula. "When Rick said 'I'll let you take Picard to Earth,'" Piller recalled, "he told me, 'I want a science fiction story going on aboard the ship at the same time.' We struggled for weeks and weeks trying to come up with an interesting science fiction story that we could match with Picard going down to Earth. One version had a child stowaway that causes problems. We didn't like that. Another had people up on the ship disappearing for no apparent reason while Picard's on Earth. Rick didn't feel there was room for both stories. He thought we should do that as a separate show ['Remember Me']. Ultimately Rick decided we're not going to ruin this episode with Picard by trying to put some ridiculous scientific thing in. We decided to do it the way it was originally conceived, as a whole show about family."

With the decision to explore the family backgrounds of other members of the crew, Moore suggested the use of a



Captain Jean Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart) walks with nephew Rene (David Tristan Birkin), returning home to the French wine-growing estate of his estranged brother. Right: Filming Picard's trek to a not-so-pleasant homecoming in Encino, California.

**“This was one of the best we did this year. It was also the lowest rated. If you're not out in space, you're not hitting the audience.”**

*- Producer Michael Piller -*

spec script about Wesley's late father, Jack Crusher, recreated on the Holodeck. “We bought the premise,” said Piller. “We felt if we were going to do a story about family and really make that the theme of an episode it was an element we really should explore and use as part of a script to sort of speak to the theme of family and how the reach and embrace of family can extend across even death. What Jack said in the scene about looking down at the newborn Wesley and seeing in his face all the people he had ever loved was something I was feeling and going through at that time, having just had a baby daughter. As the world gets more technologically smart, we find more and more ways to separate us as family. This particular season, and in general, my career and my work have always tried to reinforce family values. It's a terribly important part of my life and my work.”

“Family” also introduced viewers to Worf's foster parents in a humorous subplot in which Theodore Bikel and Georgia Brown play Worf's adoptive father and mother. “Theodore Bikel came in to read for another part,” remembered “Family's” director, Les Landau. “When he left the room we all turned to each other and said he should be Worf's father.” Landau sug-

gested Brown to play Bikel's mate, making them a couple of “Yiddish, Russian Orthodox Jews.”

The decision to cast Bikel and Brown was a matter of some controversy on the show. “It was a subject of extraordinary discussion,” said Piller. “The orders were handed down from day one not to make Worf's parents Jewish. I don't want to sound anti-Semitic. That's not what it meant. I am a Jew and so is Rick. We were very afraid of making Worf laughable. It was felt perhaps that it was inappropriate. We do not want Worf's family background to be ludicrous or broad or foolish. I argued that this story demands humor. We wrestled with this and ultimately came to a place where we were very comfortable with the kind of humor that we brought into it, which was not Yiddish, but was universal. The casting of it was Russian, not Jewish, and did contribute a great deal to the interesting backstory of Worf.”

Among the outstanding array of talent assembled by casting director Junie Lowry and the creative team for “Family” was Jeremy Kemp, who played Picard's estranged brother, and Samantha (THE BROOD) Eggar, who played his sister-in-law. One of the biggest challenges for Landau as director, was preparing for the fight in the mud between Picard and his

brother, a French grape grower, that would serve as a catalyst for their reconciliation. “Kemp physically is an older man and during pre-production he said to me, ‘I'm not sure whether I can do this,’” recalled Landau. “I thought he could. When he and Picard come in, having had this fight in the mud, and walk into the living room of their house, tracking it with mud, singing some old song, arm in arm, carrying on as if nothing has happened, I think that it was one of the most touching moments of any show I have ever done.”

Berman said he was pleased with the decision he made to give the go-ahead to “Family” despite his initial reservations. “I was hesitant at first because I didn't want to turn a two-part into a trilogy,” recalled Berman. “It stood on its own. ‘We worked a long time on it and it ended up being a unique show. It's not exactly what you would call a typical STAR TREK episode, but we've done a number of those this year.’” □

dispatching the Klingon beauty. “I killed K'Ehleyr,” laughed Piller. “The original idea was about Worf's kid and bringing back K'Ehleyr, who was having a relationship with Duras. But when we started talking about how to make the story work, I'm the one who said she should die. Finally it was clearly what seemed to want to happen in the story, that she should be trying to find out what Duras was up to, and Duras kills her. Worf, enraged, kills Duras. You wanted to get to a place where Worf was going to take Duras apart, and there's no real good reason for him to do it unless she dies.”

The year before Piller had been greeted by a hushed silence when he suggested at a story conference that Worf should refuse to give a blood transfusion to a dying Romulan centurion. “I think it is important to remember that Worf comes from an extremely violent race and background,” said Piller. “Klingons are a brutal race and he is an orphan because his parents were killed in war, so that's all part of his heritage. It's all consistent with the Worf story. I thought ‘Reunion’ was very touching, very emotional and very well directed by Jonathan [Frakes].”

As for Duras, the council member who had spearheaded Worf's discommendation in third season's “Sins of the

Suzi Plakson as K'Ehleyr in “Reunion,” Worf's Klingon beauty, dispatched by the writers in service of the script.



ley, a key player in the genesis of THE NEXT GENERATION, returns to contribute a teleplay which only partly succeeds. When the Enterprise accidentally kills a pregnant space creature, its offspring attaches itself to the Enterprise hull. The real gem of this episode is the return of Leah Brahms (Susan Gibney), one of the designers of the Enterprise engines who Geordi recreated on the holodeck in third season's "Booby Trap." When La Forge meets Brahms for the first time in the flesh, she turns out to be nothing like what he imagined (a subplot mostly written by an uncredited Jeri Taylor). The kicker is that after Geordi wines and dines Brahms he discovers she's married. The space baby story boasts some impressive special effects but is less satisfying and far more routine.

"A lot of the baby effects, especially once it latched onto the ship and went swimming out with its friends at the end, was all computer animation," said executive producer Rick Berman. "It's something we rarely use because it's not usually all that believable, but it's wonderful in this show."

"I always felt that the idea of reality versus fantasy was an interesting theme to explore," said executive producer Michael Piller. "The writer who brought it in and pitched it [Thomas Kartozián] couldn't really make the story work so we needed somebody else to go to work on it. To me, this was one of the best concepts we had all year. STAR TREK is a show of ideas, and the second half had some really great ones like this."



Geordi's blind date with fantasy girl Leah Brahms (Susan Gibney) isn't all he hoped for in "Galaxy's Child."

"All I know is that there's more going on here than being caught in a Tyken's rift. If I can't find a way to stop it we will all go insane."  
—Beverly Crusher

#### NIGHT TERRORS

3/18/91. Teleplay by Pamela Douglas and Jeri Taylor. Story by Shari Goodhart. Directed by Les Landau.

What would a season of STAR TREK be without one really dreadful episode? We may never know because this was fourth season's "Spock's Brain," "Manhunt," or you name it. The Enterprise crew is affected by sleep deprivation and starts imagining their worst nightmares—snakes in the bed, corpses rising from morgue tables and, most ludicrous of all, the turbo lift

Father," who is brutally dispatched by a bayonet through his chest, Piller said, "Mostly the reason we killed Duras is because he had it coming."

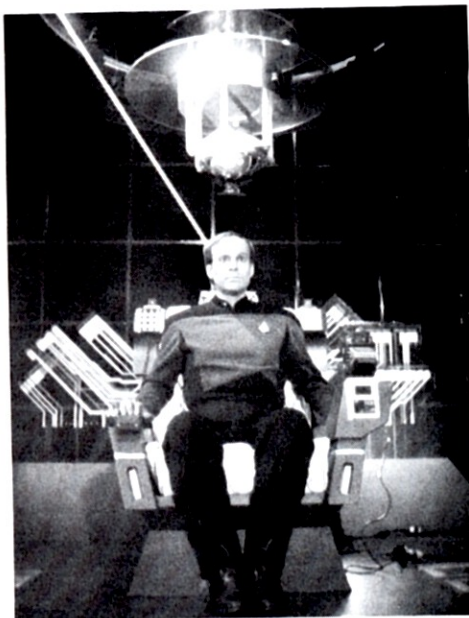
Although the show rarely ventures off the Paramount lot, it went on location several times during the just-completed fourth season, including scenes for "Family" and "Final Mission." Noted Livingston, "I love location work. I wish we could do it more but people don't build 24th century office buildings. You get cabin fever working on these stages. We all love to go. We had location managers over the hiatus go around and shoot all these odd places around Los Angeles, but no architecture exists that works for us. It's better for Richard James [TREK's production designer] to create it on the stage and to do matte shots. It's a better reality for the show."

"Where we have been successful is going to odd places like [the desert in] El Mirage. It was a natural for 'Final Mission.' I had been wanting to go there since I started on this show. It was fabulous. And in 'Family' we found a house in Encino that I shot before that looks like a French manor house. For that show we also went out to a grape orchard in the middle of the desert in Palmdale. It was about 112 degrees when we shot it. It was in early August and unbelievably hot. People were dropping and drinking Gatorade by the gallon."

**A**lthough location work is expensive, it is budgeted for in the series' annual pattern budget as is extra money for occasional epic adventures like "Yesterday's Enterprise" and "Reunion," which generally air during a sweeps month when the ratings of independent stations are monitored. "There is some thought as to what a sweeps show is," said Livingston. "Let's have Whoopi

**“There is some thought as to what a sweeps show is. Let's have Whoopi [Goldberg] or go to a planet. You pick your moments.”**

— Producer David Livingston —



Director Rob Legato filmed lasers live on stage for "The Nth Degree" to portray Dwight Schultz as Barclay in his cerebral link-up with the Enterprise computer.

[Goldberg], or go to a planet. Those decisions are made to try and maximize the return on the show. You pick your moments. We try to plan ahead. If we know coming up in four episodes we have this huge show with twenty Klingons in one room, we know we need four shows that are manageable and will save some money."

Noted story editor David Carren, "We saved money by doing special intimate shows [at the end of the fourth season] so that we could lavish some extra attention and a bigger story to climax the year with 'Redemption.' We planned that for seven or eight shows."

Among the episodes which broke precedent for STAR TREK fourth season was "First Contact," in which the Enterprise crew tries to establish relations with the inhabitants of a world which is on the verge of perfecting warp technology. "That's an episode that

truly broke format, more than any episode this season," said Berman. "Our show is a closed show, which means that we do not see, except in very rare or short instances, scenes that take place away from our characters. Michael Piller felt very strongly when that episode got written that it would be done as an open episode, that we would see the Enterprise crew as aliens from the point of view of the non-earth people. I was skeptical. I did not want to break a major format point of the show, but it seemed apropos to do it on that show."

The departure of Wil Wheaton as Wesley left a vacuum on the bridge that has made room for a number of recurring conn officers. None have truly distinguished themselves, and all have remained fairly anonymous. The need to fill Wesley's position gave rise to discussion among the staff about adding a new female regular in that position to replenish the ensemble of characters which had also lost, two years previous,

Security Chief Tasha Yar, the show's strongest female character.

"I think Rick [Berman] has felt for some time that we could use another woman in our cast," said Piller. "Everybody felt they wanted an actor of some consequence on the bridge in that job. Brent [Spiner, as Data] has a lot to do up there and if he has no one to play off, it's very difficult for him. We felt a woman was appropriate as opposed to another teenager."

The producers considered making a regular out of Shelby, the ballsy Borg expert played by Elizabeth Dennehy in Piller's "Best of Both Worlds." "I don't know if I would want to be on it all the time," said Dennehy of STAR TREK. "I found the style of acting on the show very restrained for me. I felt like I really wanted to go wild and it's very held back. If I did that for five years I'd go

# THE NEXT GENERATION

## MARINA SIRTIS SHIP'S COUNSELOR

*Sirtis' advice for the writing staff is they should stop with the sexual stereotyping!*

*By Mark Altman*

Marina Sirtis has to admit that the writing on **THE NEXT GENERATION** has been steadily improving—not that it's done her character, Counselor Deanna Troi, any good. Despite the special attention given to Troi by the writing staff fourth season, her character remains, perhaps more than any other, under-utilized and underdeveloped. Sirtis cited a third season show, "The Enemy," as an example of the way her character has been handled by the show.

"In the original draft, which I happened to read—which ordinarily we're not allowed to see so we don't make conversations like this—it was Troi and Geordi stranded on the planet," said Sirtis. "Because Geordi was blinded by the electromagnetics preventing his visor from working, when we came across the Romulan it was actually Troi who incapacitated the adversary. I felt very excited about this. I thought I would finally get to do something interesting and different. When the final script came in not only was I not on the planet, but I had one line at the end of the show—and even that was actually cut. That's the kind of thing that happens and I wish it wouldn't."

Writing staff chief Michael Piller acknowledged that servicing the lesser-used members of the **TREK** ensemble was a consideration going into the fourth season. "One of our goals from the beginning was to find stories for each character, Troi among them," said Piller. "I think the last two



With grief-stricken Janet Brooks (Kim Braden) in "The Loss."

years have seen her develop a great deal and that does not mean it's sufficient or there shouldn't be more done but I believe that she used to be a character who looked at the screen and said, 'I sense anger out there.' We've given her a chance to actually do therapy, to do some very serious stories and make some critical contributions to the solutions or problems and really become a counselor in the best sense of the word. I don't really think that she's an underdeveloped character anymore. I feel very good about Troi. She's a really sexy lady who provides an enormous amount of emotional support to our other continuing characters."

In an attempt to strengthen Troi's character fourth season, the writing staff chose to develop an oft-pitched story in which Troi loses her empathetic abilities in "The Loss." "This basic idea has been pitched to us every season," said Piller. "Finally, because we needed a Troi show, we said 'let's do it here.' She's had less attention

Troi and one-time lover Number One (Jonathan Frakes), transported to Sherwood Forest by a mischievous Q in "Q-Pid." Why does Frakes get to carry the spear?



Sirtis as Deanna Troi, miffed that the show's distaff roles do not depict women of power and authority.

this [fourth] season than any other character because of the way that the chips fell. Last year [Dr.] Beverly [Crusher] only got one show and this year Troi only got one. There were stretches where Geordi was barely seen, then he got very heavy in the second half of the season because our Geordi stories started panning out. The bottom line is that writers came in with great stories for other characters. If we had wanted to we could have given her one of a number of shows where people get in jeopardy, but at the time we felt we wanted to service other characters and that's what it came down to."

For Sirtis, **STAR TREK**'s treatment of Troi is a feminist issue. "The women on this show are very non-threatening," said Sirtis. "I don't think it's realistic. It's not realistic for the 20th century, so it's definitely not realistic for the 24th century. Ever since Denise [Crosby, as Security Chief Tasha Yar] left the show [first season] the two women that are left are both doctors in the caring professions. You don't see women in power positions. You do see female admirals, but I have to say the fans don't really care about our guest stars. They care about the regulars and what they want to see are the regular women having more power." □



Troi and fellow Betazoid John Vickery, sleepwalking through the terrors of dream deprivation.

collapsing on Picard. The incidents aren't scary, they're stupid. There's a good story, however, at the heart of this sloppy mess. Amid the "terrors," an alien vessel tries to communicate with Troi to use the Enterprise to help engineer their escape from a space anomaly, a Tyken's rift, which has captured both them and the Enterprise. Scenes of Troi flying in her dreams are laughable.

"That was a yawner, wasn't it?" said Jonathan Frakes, rhetorically. "That was a shitty piece of special effects work when she was flying with those clouds around her. That was below our standard."

"It was the first show after our Christmas hiatus and I don't think everybody was quite back on their feet yet," said executive producer Michael Piller. "The energy level was way down, the timing was off. Everybody read slowly. When the film was finished it was nine minutes too long. We had to cut huge pieces out of it in order to make it fit into an hour." Piller did not mean to suggest, however, that the missing parts would have helped.

"I enjoy the bachelor's life too much."  
—Geordi LaForge

#### IDENTITY CRISIS ★★★

3/25/91. Teleplay by Brannon Braga. Based on a story by Timothy De Haas. Directed by Winrich Kolbe.

An interesting premise, neatly directed by Winrich Kolbe. An Away Team mission from Geordi's past, while serving on the USS Victory, comes back to haunt him five years later, as members of the team begin to disappear. Geordi locates the last of the mission team, friend and colleague Susanna Leitjen (Maryann Plunkett), and discovers that she is metamorphosing into an alien creature, and that

Susanna Leitjen (Maryann Plunkett) reminisces with former shipmate Geordi before turning monstrous.



# THE NEXT GENERATION

## WRITING STAR TREK, BEHIND-THE-SCENES

*An inside look at the writing staff that broke the rules to make fourth season the best one yet.*

*By Mark Altman*

At the end of STAR TREK's third season, the perennial and now-familiar exodus occurred among its writing staff. Leaving were popular fan writer Melinda Snodgrass, story editors Hans Beimler and Richard Manning and producer Ira Behar. Only story editor Ron Moore, promoted to executive script consultant, remained on the show with returning executive producer Michael Piller, whose shepherding of the writing staff third season was instrumental in the series' soaring success.

Executive producer Rick Berman, who runs the show for Paramount, accounted for the high rate of turnover on the series' writing staff by pointing to the potentially daunting set of dramatic parameters the new STAR TREK relies on. "When Maurice Hurley left [second season] there was basically a weeding-out process by trial and error, trying to bring new people on board," said Berman. "STAR TREK is not an easy show to write. There are some people who could be Emmy Award winning writers on a lawyer show or a police drama who just can't grasp what it is to write for a somewhat stylized 24th century world where the conflict between characters is very, very subtle. We try to avoid the traditional form of intercharacter



Among fourth season's character encores, Majel Barrett as Mrs. Troi with Carel Struycken as Homm, in "Half a Life," catering lunch in engineering.

conflict. Because of the way our people treat each other in the 24th century, there are a lot of writers who just don't get it, or who have a lot of difficulty at it. It's nothing to do with how smart they are, or how good they are, but how they fit into writing STAR TREK. So you end up getting turnover. We had very little turnover this year [fourth season] and I suspect we'll have less next year."

It was up to Piller, in conjunction with Berman, to assemble a new team of writers for the fourth season. "I hired one producer just on reputation," said Piller. "I had to take a chance because I needed help. It turned out not to be a decision either of us was comfortable with, so that didn't work out." The producer was

Lee Sheldon, who wrote the script for fourth season's "Remember Me" and then joined the long list of writer/producer hyphenates who have beamed off THE NEXT GENERATION over "creative differences."

Piller also hired writer Joe Menosky, suggested by a colleague from Piller's days as a writer on SIMON AND SIMON, to do a rewrite of fourth season's "Clues." Said Piller, "I thought he did such a good job I hired him on staff." Also helping out was a Writer's Guild intern, Hilary Bader, who sold the story idea which later became "The Loss."

Piller hired Jeri Taylor early in the season, recommended by Sheldon before his departure, to do a rewrite on fourth season's "Suddenly Human," and invited her to join the staff as a supervising producer. "I did the rewrite as a sort of tryout," said Taylor. "I am [Michael Piller's] second in command, his pointman, as it were. On this show our producing chores are somewhat limited. In the past, I've been very involved with all aspects of production, from casting to post-production to scoring. It's more compartmentalized here. It allows us to devote all of our energy to turning out the scripts. They're very difficult to do."

Taylor's previous work in television as a writer/producer/director, including stints



on such earthbound shows as QUINCY, MAGNUM P. I., IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT and JAKE AND THE FATMAN, hadn't prepared her for the final frontier. "I was a STAR TREK virgin," Taylor laughed. "I came to this show having never seen an episode of either series or any of the movies. My kids think it's wonderful, but I am probably the least likely person they ever expected to see end up on staff here."

Despite Taylor's impressive credentials, she needed to take a crash course in TREK lore. "I went from someone who had never seen anything to falling in love with the series," said Taylor. "Within weeks I had seen every episode of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION and the features. Then I went back and watched every single episode of the original series. It was a fascinating experience. I sort of emerged from my den a month later with my eyes like little pinwheels. Doing it so intensively in such a short period of time was like being immersed in that universe. I felt like I had a thorough understanding and grasp of the characters and I saw the differences in the approach to the old series and the new series."

Co-story editors David Carren and Larry Carroll joined the fourth season staff around the same time as Taylor, hired after they pitched their story for "Future Imperfect," an episode in which Riker awakens aboard the Enterprise fifteen years in the future and discovers he has a son named Jean-Luc and must preside over a peace conference with the Romulans. "We pitched to the show on May 14, 1990," said Carren, whose work as a television writer includes STARSKY AND HUTCH, the new TWILIGHT ZONE, and the '70s revival of BUCK ROGERS. "Michael [Piller] loved the story so much that he stopped Larry halfway through



Story editor David Carren with STAR TREK's "great bird of the galaxy," series creator Gene Roddenberry. Bending Roddenberry's rules makes for a great show.

**“The writers on this show are successful when they jettison the misconception that you can't have conflict in the 24th century.”**

**- Producer Michael Piller -**

the pitch and said, 'You've got a story with an option for a teleplay.'" Carroll, Carren's writing partner was a film editor on the original Tobe Hooper TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE and has written a number of low-budget independent films including TOURIST TRAP and an array of Empire films including GHOST WARRIOR, which he directed.

The challenge for the show's writers is devising stories for the Enterprise ensemble that lack the major character conflicts which serve on most dramatic series as the tenets of good drama. "That is where most shows get their stories," said Taylor. "We don't have that. We find the conflict on the outside. It's a different kind of conflict. It's not as easy to develop, but in many ways it's more interesting. We just can't fall back on the kind of comfortable things that the 20th century gives us. We have to stretch and work harder."

Berman, who keeps an eye on the show's storylines as part of his overall production responsibilities, agreed that the lack of interpersonal conflict among the characters presents obstacles which need to be overcome. "We have to manufacture our conflict, which makes it difficult," said Berman. "Any dramatic television show has a set of rules that you've got to follow. If you're writing ST. ELSEWHERE you've got to know about medicine. If you're writing for L. A. LAW, you've got to know about jurisprudence in the state of California. On STAR TREK, you've got two sets of rules: a set of rules dealing with physics and astrophysics and astronomy that we try to follow as accurately as we can, and then you're got a set of rules having to do with STAR TREK, which are made-up rules. There's no such thing as a dilithium crystal or people transporting. There's no such thing as a warp drive and Romulans and Ferengi and Klingons. It's fantasy, but it's 25

years worth of established rules that have to be followed. So you've got the rules of science and the rules of STAR TREK and writers have to be willing and able to follow both sets of rules, and that's difficult."

But it's STAR TREK creator Gene Roddenberry's guidelines forbidding interpersonal conflicts among the Enterprise crew that sends most of the writing emigres screaming from the show. "It's a tough set of rules to deal with," noted Carroll. "But there's a reason that they're there and a reason that they work. It's the thing that makes the show special. Sometimes you really wish you could go for a more conventional dramatic approach, that one of our characters could have a problem. If you did that, though, it would be like every other show on television. It wouldn't be STAR TREK."

Piller disputed the notion that character conflict is a taboo subject on the series and

nuts, but to go back every once in a while would be nice."

Dennehy, a pert and pretty blonde, appreciated the way the show cast her against type as Shelby. "I think STAR TREK casts unconventionally," said Dennehy. "They tend to cast real actors as opposed to people who look like what they have in mind, which is very unusual for California, where 'look' is everything, where they'll go for somebody who they think looks right sooner than they will somebody who can act the shit out of something. People who look like me don't usually get parts like Shelby. They usually go to the dark-haired women. Blondes are typically thought of as being light-headed bimbos who run around in wet t-shirts. It was great for me because I'm not like that. I've never been an ingenue. It was great for me to do some scenery chewing."

But Dennehy's Shelby won't be sitting on the bridge anytime in the near future, according to Piller. "Ultimately we decided to hopefully find somebody in story rather than trying to create somebody out of whole cloth," said Piller. "It's still up in the air." Another early consideration had been to replace Wesley with a female conn officer who would get romantically entangled with Transporter Chief Miles O'Brien

Crusher removes Ambassador Odan a parasite, from Riker in "The Host," aided by Nurse Ogawa (Patti Yatsutake).



he'll be next. LeVar Burton as Geordi keeps it believable as he desperately tries to unravel the secret of his transformation—a nicely designed makeup by Michael Westmore with effective ultra violet lighting effects by Wildfire—before it is too late. Geordi turning human again after such a substantial physical transformation turns out to be too much of a stretch, however.

"It was a very tough script to solve," said executive producer Michael Piller. "The script was originally bought on spec, submitted by a fan. It was very heavy on point-of-view and stylistic devices that we didn't want to do. The original script had two non-STAR TREK characters going through what Geordi and the woman went through. It was a very complicated, complex production that the director did a terrific job on. I was very happy with the show. It may not have been one of the best scripts we wrote, but it's a great example of how those guys in production can really turn out a helluva product."

**"Has Barclay done anything that could be considered potentially threatening?"** —Picard  
**"Well, he did make a pass at me last night... a good one."** —Troi

#### THE NTH DEGREE ★★½

4/1/91. Written by Joe Menosky. Directed by Robert Legato.

Barclay, the wimp from third season's "Hollow Pursuits," returns and has his intellect enhanced by beings attempting to bring the Enterprise to the center of the universe to say "hi." Not as good as Barclay's first outing, the show benefits from effects supervisor-turned-director Rob Legato's impressive state-of-the-art visuals, and a strong return performance by Dwight Schultz as the likeable milquetoast. Scenes in which Barclay becomes more assertive, thanks to his alien gift, flirting with Troi and engaging in a physics discussion with Albert Einstein on the holodeck are a delight. But, ultimately, the show's payoff is unsatisfying and all too familiar.

"We put Barclay on our laundry list of things we wanted to bring back fourth season," said executive producer Michael Piller. "He's a very interesting character and a great actor. We were having trouble finding something that would make it worthwhile. Joe [Menosky] had

Little theatre on the Enterprise, Barclay (Dwight Schultz) plays Cyrano to Crusher's Roxanne.



Theodore Bikel as Sergey and Georgia Brown as Helena, Worf's adoptive parents played by two of the most renowned actors in Yiddish theatre, sharing a drink with their "boy" in Ten Forward in "Family," a fourth season show that broke all the rules.

cited some examples. "When you have Worf, who is a very honorable character, face the issue of his own hostility toward the Romulans in letting one of them die [in third season's "The Enemy"], that doesn't make him any less a civilized being," said Piller. "It's just that his code is different from Picard's. Their interests are not the same so they can't ultimately come down to the same decision. You look at "Best of Both Worlds"—Shelby is not an evil character. She's bright and has an agenda. It puts her directly in conflict with [Riker] who has his own agenda. And they both feel very honorable and right about what they're trying to do."

According to Piller, interpersonal conflict just manifests itself in a different way on THE NEXT GENERATION than other television dramas. "It doesn't mean what most writers are used to doing on television, which is having blacks and whites," said Piller. "It is much more difficult to find conflict here because you must get inside the characters and really know what they care about. But if they are real people then they will have natural conflicts because they will have different interests that bring them together. It doesn't mean black and white. It's shades of grey and that's what real writing is all about. The writers of

this show are successful when they jettison the misconception that you can't have conflict in the 24th century because it's 'wrong.'"

STAR TREK's ability to address contemporary social issues offers a particular appeal to its writers. But besides "Legacy," a fourth season show on gangs, for the most part the series skirted social issues last year. "We felt we had not done good work on social issue shows at the end of third season," said Piller. "We had not said anything new about terrorism ["The High Ground"] or the Vietnam vet ["The Hunted"]. We felt if we couldn't say anything new, we shouldn't say anything at all, so very little of our development fourth season was in the social issue area. When we set out to do the gang episode we made a decision not to do a story that explored the dynamics of gangs, but instead use that as a backdrop for a personal story about Tasha's sister. Don't come in with an issue, I say, come in with a story."

With all of the complexities of writing for THE NEXT GENERATION, it can be as long as four months before the writing staff buys a spec script or a story pitch, despite an avalanche of submissions. "We take hundreds of pitches and read through thousands of spec scripts sent by aspiring

writers," said Carroll. "They don't just come in and get rubber stamped and returned. They are read by the people on staff."

Ideas are most frequently shot down for either being too big or for not using the show's ensemble cast of characters. "They're plot-driven pieces that involve kings, queens, entire planets and space battles," said Carren of the rejects. "We've gotten spec scripts that don't have any scenes that take place aboard the Enterprise. What excites us is when we get a pitch that is a character-driven show that takes place mostly on our ship. That's basically what most of our stories are, not just because of budget, but because those are often the stronger stories. We want character pieces and those are, more often than not, interior pieces."

"On the great majority of television shows," said Carren, "you can go in and pitch old film titles or recent film titles, but you can't do that here." Added Carroll, "You can't walk in and say we're going to do SILENCE OF THE LAMBS on the Enterprise. It has to be a STAR TREK story. It takes a long time to develop a script here. Usually the time is three to six weeks elsewhere, but we can spend as long as twelve weeks on a script to make it right." □

(Colm Meaney). "I was against that because I felt that O'Brien was too good a character and potential benefit to the show to make him another star's supporting character," said Piller. "I felt he would always sort of be a sounding board for someone else to talk to and I didn't want to waste him on that. We never did get around to replacing Wesley, and O'Brien emerged on his own. I think he'll continue to do some interesting stuff for us."

Rather than create a new female conn officer who would marry O'Brien, the Transporter chief was married-off instead to a new supporting character, Keiko, the ship's botanist played by Rosalind Chao, a close, personal friend in real life of Elizabeth Dennehy, and an earlier candidate for a recurring role in the show. "It all grew out of doing a 'Day in the Life' story," said

Moore. "What happens during a day on the Enterprise? Some of the things that came up are: a baby gets born, maybe somebody dies—maybe not. Then somebody said, 'What if someone gets married?' We obviously didn't want any of the regulars getting married, because that's a big thing, and we didn't want it to be a faceless nobody. Everybody was delighted with the work Colm Meaney had been doing for us and we did want to do more with him as the series was going on and we said, 'This is a neat idea—we'll marry O'Brien.'"

The idea of marrying-off one of the main characters dated back to the end of third season when Piller quietly proposed the marriage of the show's lead character, Captain Jean-Luc Picard, which would require not only the approval of Berman and Roddenberry, but the very highest echelons of the Paramount Pictures television executive staff. "I had argued last year when we were having trouble finding good Picard stories and doing character stuff that we should

**“There were a lot of brilliant decisions. It was really gutsy getting a bald English actor to play the French captain of the Enterprise.”**

— Story Editor Larry Carroll —



Data and Keiko (Rosalind Chao) at her wedding to transporter chief O'Brien (Colm Meaney, r) in "Data's Day." The writers considered marrying-off Picard.

marry him off," said Piller. "Gene [Roddenberry] felt that was a mistake and, in retrospect, I think he was right. I was delighted though to have the permission to have one of our crew get married and have that on a regular basis to play with. O'Brien is an important part of the ship."

**N**otably, the type of risks the new STAR TREK has taken this year would not have been possible without some of the show's early mistakes. In a way, "Naked Now" and "Home Soil," two of the first season's worst episodes, paved the way for what would come. Rather than look to the old series for inspiration, the new STAR TREK has consistently sought to maintain its own direction and integrity.

"When I was thirteen, I went on the set of the original series," recalled freelance writer Marc Scott Zicree, who made his first sale to STAR TREK fourth season. "It was the last episode they ever shot, 'Turnabout Intruder' [Kirk

switches bodies with a woman], and it was just wonderful. You get that same feeling on the new sets, except you feel a bit more like you're in a Ramada Inn, which is the way it looks, but it's still a thrill."

The fourth season in which the new characters have become firmly established in the minds of viewers has provided a chance to break some of the rules which bound both the makers of the original series and the new. But THE NEXT GENERATION equivalent of TREK Classic's dreadful fare like "Turnabout Intruder" seems to be a thing of the past.

"I think it was a natural process of evolution," said fourth season story editor Larry Carroll. "Obviously, you say you're going to make a sequel to STAR TREK and that's a pretty gutsy thing to do and you have a tremendous weight and there were a lot of bril-

liant decisions that were made in terms of the casting, the structure, the definition of the 24th century that, when you look at them, are amazing. They were not decisions people would normally go for. It was really gutsy getting a bald, English actor to play the French captain of the Enterprise. It took a while for the show to come together, and for it to really get up and get rolling, but it's been a gradual process of evolution to find the stories that work right."

Carroll's writing partner, David Carren agreed. "There's one basic thing that never really changed and part of that evolution was the new STAR TREK finding its way to being a family," said Carren, who with Carroll was successful in exploring the theme of the Enterprise as family fourth season in "Future Imperfect." Their script about Riker's son earned the writing team a story editor position on the show. "The old show worked because it basically was a family," said Carren. "It was more like Kirk was a big brother than a father figure and everyone else was

this concept of somebody who became super-intelligent and said maybe this could be our Barclay show."

**"Sir, I protest. I am not a merry man!"** — *Worf, consigned by Q to serve with Picard as Robin Hood*

#### Q-PID

★★★½

4/22/91. Teleplay by Ira Steven Behr. Story by Rande Russell & Ira Steven Behr. Directed by Cliff Bole.

Vash (Jennifer Hetrick), of third season's "Captain's Holiday," joins an archaeological conference aboard the Enterprise and is reunited with Picard. Q returns as a matchmaker who puts the two lovebirds and the crew of the Enterprise in a recreation of Robin Hood to teach Picard a lesson about love. Like TREK classic's "Spectre of the Gun," this is a delightfully giddy little adventure. It didn't make sense 23 years ago when Kirk and Spock ended up at the O. K. Corral, nor is Picard as Robin Hood any more credible. Its undeniable appeal is that it's generally hysterical, with comic moments bordering on brilliance. The PRINCE OF THIEVES storyline is vividly brought to the screen, but ultimately inappropriate for a story which should be a comedy of manners, about the staid Captain fearing the exposure of his relationship with a younger and sensual woman to his crew. Q is relegated to supporting player status, which is unfortunate since John DeLancie is always such a joy.

"This didn't fit into a niche that we do but that's okay," said executive producer Rick Berman. "That's fun. It's nice to bring the characters a little bit more to life. As a series gets older, the characters get richer because they've got more backstory. In the first season, they had no backstory, now they have a hundred episodes worth of backstory and because of that, their personalities grow, they become richer and the characters have more depth to them."



Q's lesson in love almost loses Picard his head in "Q-Pid," TREK's take on the legend of Robin Hood.

#### THE DRUMHEAD

★★★½

4/29/91. Written by Jeri Taylor. Directed by Jonathan Frakes.

One of THE NEXT GENERATION's most superb and provocative episodes in which a Klingon spying for the Romulans is discovered aboard the Enterprise, inciting a witch hunt for his collaborator, which leads all the way to Picard. Rarely has an episode so well



# THE MAKING OF "FIRST CONTACT"

*Aliens graduate into the Federation but behind-the-scenes it wasn't pomp and circumstance.*

*By Mark Altman*

"First Contact," among THE NEXT GENERATION's finest fourth season episodes, is basically the premise of the '50s Robert Wise science fiction classic THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (1951), transplanted to the 24th century, with Riker of the Enterprise in place of Michael Rennie's Klaatu. "I said it was a '50s space movie, except we're the aliens," said executive producer Michael Piller, who wrote the script based on a story idea by Mark Scott Zicree. "That's really the way I tried to write it."

In the show a wounded Riker is carted to a hospital facility on an alien world where the doctors quickly discover he is "not one of us." The novel idea of the Enterprise making "First Contact" with an alien race on the verge of attaining warp drive technology was originally pitched by Zicree third season, and went through a number of permutations

Writer Marc Scott Zicree.



In the show's take on THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, Riker (Jonathan Frakes) takes the Klaatu role, hospitalized on a world developing warp technology.

before it finally reached the screen. "It was pitched by a very good writer," said Piller of Zicree, known as the author of *The Twilight Zone Companion*. "But he just couldn't find the right tone for the show. The story was something nobody could quite solve."

Zicree's idea for the Enterprise to make "First Contact" with an alien civilization in order to foment its entry into the Federation seems like an obvious premise for the series, but it's one neither THE NEXT GENERATION nor the original show had ever tackled. "It was something so obvious, that we hadn't addressed in 150 episodes of STAR TREK," said Marina Sirtis, who plays Troi and is integral to the show's story. "Of course there are going to be planets who are going to develop warp power and go out into space. How are we [the Federation] going to deal with this?"

"It may be the most intrigu-

ing episode of the season," said Piller, who was hooked by Zicree's pitch from the start. "No other show in the history of STAR TREK has presented an alien perspective of our characters. That makes it very special and unique." It also made the show hard to write because taking the alien point-of-view violated the series' own self-imposed writing format. Ultimately, Piller had to get a special dispensation to write it himself.

"I'm very much a supporter of the rules of Gene Roddenberry's universe," said Piller. "But I also love to break them if it's in the interest of the show. I went to [executive producer] Rick [Berman] and said that even though I know he doesn't like to break format, this could be a special show, if he would let me write it from the alien point-of-view. He did, as long as I let everyone know that we weren't going to ever break this rule again."

Piller tackled the script himself after an earlier draft by Dennis Putnam Baily and David Bischoff—who wrote third season's "Tin Man"—and another by story editors Ron Moore and Joe Menosky, couldn't be made to work, trying to write Zicree's story idea from the Enterprise point-of-view. Zicree, who was given sole story credit on the episode, is positive about the final result. "I think it turned out well, considering how many times it went awry in various

kind of his siblings and Spock was the wise uncle. There were all kinds of interesting dynamics to their relationships. The family didn't really jell per se on this show until deep into the second season or even third, where it really came together. I think Ten Forward [the Enterprise lounge] was an important part of that. It provided a family milieu and all those elements fell into place and you saw there's Picard and he's the father and here's the rest of the members of his family."

"On the original series Roddenberry had that basic kernel of an idea, which is that the Enterprise is one big, happy family," said Zicree. "Harlan Ellison and he had all those enormous arguments because when Harlan wrote 'City on the Edge of Forever' he had drug dealers on the Enterprise and Roddenberry took it all out and said, 'No, these are the cream of the crop' and, in retrospect, you see Roddenberry was right and that's why you've got all these Trekkies dressing up in their uniforms and dreaming of being on the Enterprise. At least, he had the wisdom to realize there should be family spats, because that's realistic, but by the time he got to the new show and he was pushing seventy I guess he wanted lukewarm farina and wanted there to be no conflict ever."

During the first season or two of the new show, Zicree noted "the writers were so hamstrung by Roddenberry's insistence that the characters not have any personal grudges and disagreements *nothing* happened. It was so incredibly static that the only way you could have a story where anything happened was by putting it on the Holodeck. That's why [scriptwriter] Tracy Torme was doing that kind of story, because that's the only place you could have life-threatening situations and conflict. Fortunately, as other people came on the show they were able to loosen that up."

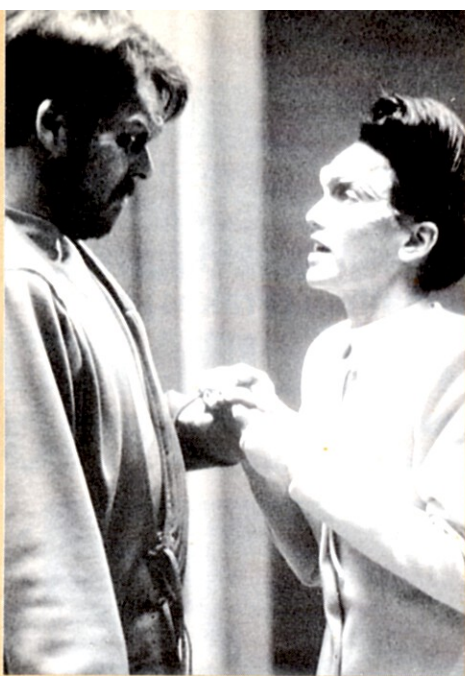
The STAR TREK audience is unique in the annals of television history. Tolerant of the early flaws in the series' first two years, the fans have endured the early disasters and have been richly rewarded for

stages," he said. "It went through many different story approaches and got muddled in the process, yet the story that emerged was very close to the original."

At various times during its development, Zicree's idea was considered as a candidate for both the two parter that ended the show's third season, and for the fourth season episode that would be Wesley's swan song for the series. The unused Wesley script, titled "Graduation," had the young ensign beam down to the planet as part of a cultural exchange with the Federation, staying on once his mission was a success.

"It was very hard shoe-horning Wesley into "Graduation," said Zicree. "Why is he down on the planet? Because he wants to leave the series. That doesn't help when you're trying to make sense of the story. One idea we talked about and rejected was having the Enterprise landing party become big, big media celebrities. People would start dressing like them and making their own STAR TREK uniforms and paraphernalia. It would basically be a take on STAR TREK fandom. In that version, Wesley became a teen heartthrob, but the silliness of that concept ruled it unworkable."

Another unused premise involved the Enterprise's encounter with a warp ship from the planet, making its maiden voyage, an idea that Zicree said had the support of story editor Ron Moore. "Ron and I were stumping for the ship to encounter a derelict Enterprise shuttle craft with Picard and several other of the Enterprise crew aboard. They are taken aboard the warp ship as aliens and the ship heads back to its home planet, deciding what to do with our guys, whether they should alert the Enterprise as Picard requests, or not. It's a closed-room story in which you build relationships within the confines of the warp ship. The issue is whether



Riker gets propositioned by sexually curious alien nightcall nurse Lanel (CHEERS' Bebe Neuwirth), an offbeat scene by Michael Piller that "just happened."

**"I'm very much a supporter of the rules of Gene Roddenberry's universe, but I love to break them if it's in the interest of the show."**

*- Producer Michael Piller -*

they will liquidate our guys or trust them. We eventually discover, at the end, that there was no malfunction on the shuttlecraft. It was entirely a ploy on Picard's part to allow these extremely xenophobic aliens to trust the Federation because they would feel they had the upper hand."

One scene in "First Contact" Zicree took exception to is the hysterically off-beat escape attempt by Riker in which he is assisted by a beautiful space alien played by CHEERS' Bebe Neuwirth. The character demands to have sex with the incarcerated Riker before she helps him avert security. "I thought that scene was rather strange," said Zicree. "Some like it, others don't. It was a judgement call. I felt it had a sort of *National Enquirer* touch. And I felt because it was such a funny scene it might have treated the story a little too lightly, trivialized it with a wink at the

audience."

Piller explained how the scene came about. "The draft before mine had a technologically convoluted way of getting Riker to escape," said Piller. "It was a typical STAR TREK make-the-locks-go-away thing which I felt wasn't right. I got to that page and I didn't know what was going to happen next. That whole scene with Lanel [Neuwirth] coming in and saying, 'I've always wanted to have sex with an alien' just happened. And when I wrote it I said, 'Boy, am I in trouble now.' That doesn't come out of planning. It comes out of writing."

Berman recalled Piller coming into his office with the scene in hand. "He came to me one day, having written a one-page scene that was quite sexy, and I loved it," said Berman. "We had known Bebe wanted to do the show. She works on the Paramount lot and had stated her fascination in doing the show. We showed it to her, and she did it, and did a wonderful job."

Among those who contributed to the final script, story editor Ron Moore contributed the idea that Riker would be injured and captured on the planet. "Originally, they were going to have Riker hit by a truck, trying to save a child," said Zicree. "I had a problem with that because I said the Enterprise is supposed to make 'first contact' and we want them to be smart. They shouldn't be dumb."

Among those who offered input in "First Contact's" script development in its early stages was Gene Roddenberry, whose suggestion befuddled Zicree. "He wanted a totalitarian society where everybody was happy," said Zicree. "That went against my experience of totalitarian society. Ultimately Piller said that didn't work, and let's forget it. But by then you're already three steps off the right direction and trying to get back." □

straddled the line between entertainment and social commentary. The performances by Patrick Stewart, Jean Simmons as Admiral Sattie, and Michael Dorn are terrific, as is Jonathan Frakes' handling of the show as director, and Ron Jones' evocative score. Jeri Taylor's script includes references to a Klingon/Romulan alliance, the Borg, first season's "Conspiracy" and "Data's Day," seamlessly interweaving TREK's fantasy world with the all-too-real world in which fundamental human rights are often trampled because of fear and suspicion.

"We saved \$250,000 on that episode," said Frakes of a show designed as a cost-saver. "It was the lowest budget of the season. The risk is that shows like this are too chatty. People like a little action. But if you like dialogue and acting, this is certainly the episode. [Jean Simmons] was brilliant. She's an enormous Trekkie, watches the show every week, and then gets on the phone with her friends and they talk about the episode. The people who are fans of this show never cease to amaze me."

Jeri Taylor wrote the script from an idea proposed by Ron Moore called "It Can't Happen Here," starting from scratch. "The idea was taking the McCarthy era and the Salem witch hunts, showing they can happen even in our enlightened 24th century, and how individual personal liberties can be stepped on. If you do that, ever so lightly, even in the name of freedom, liberty and the preservation of the Federation, it becomes disastrous. It's very provocative, a show which is a little darker than some of the others. It's nothing but talk. It was a real challenge as a writer to make that work."



Betazoid interrogator Sabin (Bruce French) gives Picard the McCarthy treatment in "The Drumhead."

**"It's your Prime Directive, not mine."**  
—Lwaxana Troi

**HALF A LIFE** ★★★

5/6/91. Written by Peter Allen Fields. Directed by Les Landau.

A wonderfully, well-realized episode in which Lwaxana Troi (Majel Barrett) falls in love with an alien scientist, Timicin (David Ogden Stiers) who is supposed to kill himself on his sixtieth birthday, in accordance with the rules and rituals of his planet's culture. Barrett (Mrs. Gene Roddenberry) has never been better as Troi, a comedy staple of the series since

first season. Though the episode boasts the expected humor content of Lwaxana's annual outing, it's also poignant and thought-provoking in its approach to assessing the role and place of the elderly in society and boasts a wonderful supporting turn by M\*A\*S\*H's David Ogden Stiers, and some fine work from Marina Sirtis, as Lwaxana's long-suffering daughter.

"It showed a whole new side to Majel Barrett as an actress," said director Les Landau. "She's usually this flimsy, whimsical Auntie Mame of the universe, but in this episode she's a very sensitive, warm and caring individual. This episode probably has less to do with our regular characters than any other episode in the history of the show. The beauty of dealing with people like Michael Piller and Rick Berman is that they are open to exploring, not only the universe, but new ideas within the confines of that universe."



Majel Barrett as Lwaxana, falling for an alien (David Ogden Stiers) destined to kill himself at age 60.

"Beverly, I can only imagine what you're going through and I want you to know I'm here."

—Picard to Crusher

## THE HOST

★★★

5/13/91. Written by Michael Horvath. Directed by Marvin V. Rush.

Gates McFadden truly shines in this remarkably ambitious romantic installment of the show in which Dr. Crusher falls in love with a Federation ambassador, Odan (Franc Luz), who is being ferried aboard the Enterprise to negotiate a planetary dispute. When Odan is injured, the crew discovers a parasitic creature inside his body which is the real ambassador. Unlike many TREKS, the intriguing science fiction premise serves as a catalyst for real human drama, full of both humor and pathos. The issues raised, albeit extremely subtly, about gay rights, are as daring as the show has ever gotten in addressing contemporary social issues. The show cops out at the end when Crusher rebuffs Odan, who gets transplanted into the body of a woman, Kareel (Nicole Orth-Pallavicini), even though Crusher was clearly in love with the entity, regardless of the forms it had taken. "Perhaps someday our ability to love won't be so limited," Crusher says in the episode's coda. Director of photography Marvin Rush makes a deft directing debut, calling the shots instead of framing

their patience in the show's third and fourth season. "When it clicks it's one of the best shows on television," said Zicree of THE NEXT GENERATION. "It's one of the few shows I watch and one of the few I want to write for. The episodes that really work are the ones that shake up the structure, like 'Yesterday's Enterprise,' which did this wonderful 'what if' scenario. I like those kinds of stories. But still the show has improved each year and the ratio of good episodes to bad has gotten better each year. In the first few years it was one good episode in every blue moon and if I saw another episode where superior aliens put them on trial..."

As for the show's fifth, and quite possibly final, season, producer David Livingston speculated about what's in store. "More Klingons, more Romulans, more weird guys," he said. "That's what I like. Aliens that are doing bad things and have our people do bad things. Have them get weird and not be quite as together. Show some foibles, show them even though we're in the 24th century, we're still humans and get us involved in situations where we have to make real tough decisions, like Picard had to make this season in a lot of episodes."

David Carren, who's had all summer to think about what he wants to bring to THE NEXT GENERATION in its fifth season, suggested that O'Brien's new married status will hold a great appeal for the writers in the coming year. "I would definitely say you'll be seeing more of Keiko and O'Brien," Carren said. "Kirk would get involved with a lady on a planet and she would get hit by a truck or turn green and go to another ship. After all, we have 1,000 people on board and someone has got to have a family and get married and eventually who knows what else will happen."

Another eventuality is the return of Wesley for an episode or two. "He's at Starfleet study-

**“You look at these men and they're playing cops and robbers. It's like being a kid again. Jonathan [Frakes] has it down to an art.”**

— Actor Elizabeth Dennehy —



Space Administrator Mirasta Yale (Carolyn Seymour) decides to stay with the Enterprise rather than return to her isolationist homeworld in "First Contact."

ing hard," speculated Livingston. "Maybe he'll come home and bring his girlfriend to meet Mom—an alien with three heads."

**R**egardless of STAR TREK's improving quality, Zicree feels the show has room to grow in the future. "The thing with STAR TREK that was so particularly frustrating in the first few seasons—less so now, but still there—is you see the enormous potential of the show," said Zicree. "They weren't realizing it, having episodes without reasonable conclusions. Fortunately, Michael Piller came on and they're more on track, but there's still much further they can go. STAR TREK generally does not do political statements. It doesn't do heavy-duty social statements and they haven't done much in terms of sexual-

ity. Some of the science fictional concepts are exciting, but in terms of the social statements, that's not really the direction they go in. They don't shake the cage much."

Berman defended the show's lack of daring. "I think we've dealt with issues in certain respects," said Berman. "There have been so many groundbreaking television shows in the last 25 years. When STAR TREK began, television was relatively young. I think it's a whole different medium today."

Supervising producer Jeri Taylor maintained that the new STAR TREK has tackled some fundamental issues, even if the show hasn't been as outspoken as its predecessor. "What is at the core of these stories and has been from the very beginning is the human condition," said Taylor. "These are stories about people and about ideas and things that matter, interpersonal relationships, moral dilemmas and emotional jeopardy. Those things are universal and translate well."

For Berman, the new STAR TREK carries forward the same concepts which made the old show so timeless and enduring. "The most important elements of the show we have retained," said Berman, "a family of positive, strong people who are going off where no one has gone before and stories that deal with issues and ideas and people who are better than people are today—a family off in space. I think that was very important then and it's important now. It does have a magical quality to it."

The "magic" comes through to those working on the set. "You look at these men and they're playing cops and robbers," said actress Dennehy about her two-episode stint on STAR TREK. "It's like being a kid again and the one who has it down to an art is Jonathan [Frakes] because he's like a little kid. He's so much fun. When he's on the set you're

# THE NEXT GENERATION

## JONATHAN FRAKES ACTOR/DIRECTOR

*Number One with a camera, Frakes helmed two of fourth season's best shows.*

By Mark Altman

Jonathan Frakes plays Riker, STAR TREK's second in command who serves in the shadow of Captain Picard. In the just-completed fourth season, Riker got to take command of the Enterprise—if only for one episode—and Frakes got to take command of the show as a developing director who helmed two of its finest episodes, "Reunion" and "The Drumhead," the latter an indictment of McCarthyism. Frakes said he would like to see STAR TREK continue to be issue-oriented.

"I think it's certainly a more conscious show than a lot of things on television today," observed Frakes. "I admire and am proud of that aspect of it, but I don't think you can ever satisfy everyone's image of what needs to be said. But I think, for the most part, there's a very healthy social and political awareness that comes through on this show."

The issue on everyone's mind when the show was in production earlier this year was The Gulf War, not one the series was prepared to tackle. "At the beginning of the war there was a feeling of total absurdity," said Frakes of the mood on the set. "We're playing war games where there is no violence. Why are we continuing to shoot this syndicated television show when we're literally at war? But it soon became clear that they were not going to shut down production so that we could be emotional. Certain members of the company were tied into it in a very hawkish, and therefore, frightening type of way, to me, more



Frakes, Enterprise's Number One.

so than other members of the crew. The political cross section becomes more evident at a time of heightened political awareness like a war, and that's what I found really fascinating. The closet John Birchers really showed their colors. That was somewhat unnerving. Ironically, some of the stories we were shooting ["The Wounded"] had to deal with one planet violating another's sovereignty. But Gene [Roddenberry] is conscious and

adamant about not discussing religious issues, which is clearly a part of what the problems in the Middle East are based on. He has aggressively shied away from that."

One thing Trek's Number One bridge officer would like to see more of is a rekindled romance between him and Counselor Troi, which has been alluded to for four years and never consummated. I still wish I understood why they dropped the Riker/Troi relationship," Frakes said. "Marina [Sirtis] and I have been fighting to keep that alive for years. First of all, it seems that when we do get the rare

Data and Riker watch helplessly as Worf kills Duras in "Reunion," a Klingon revenge epic directed by Frakes that proved among fourth season's best episodes.



Frakes as Commander William Riker in "Legacy," returning to the Enterprise with a wounded Ishara Yar (Beth Toussaint), the late Tasha Yar's sister.

moment together it provides a nice, different color, certainly to my character, because it's a quieter, more sensitive part of Riker. The writers have told us that they've swept that relationship under the carpet so that Riker and Troi would be available for alien relationships, but I wonder if there isn't some value in having a relationship between us."

Frakes thinks the series took more risks in its first two seasons. "The shows may be better now, but you look at something like 'Skin of Evil,' that was absurd. We had Patrick [Stewart] sitting and talking into a black oil slick. But what was wrong with that? I suffered physically, like a fool. Sure, I'll get into that black Metamucil shit. That was when we took chances."

Frakes also maintained that the new STAR TREK is slightly too dour for his tastes and could use more humor to lighten the mood. "I love the lighter moments," he said. "I wish there was more of that sense of irony that they had among the company of the original series. We haven't quite captured as much of it, which I think was one of the great attractions of the original triumvirate. I always wish that Brent [Spiner] and Patrick [Stewart] and I could [do that]. We try, but sometimes it's just not in the writing. They're either afraid of doing more comedy or they don't have the writing ability." □



Crusher falls for Odan (Frank Luz), the Trill ambassador who is actually a parasite inhabiting a human host.

them, working around McFadden who was pregnant and beginning to show during shooting.

"The episode had to be shot in such a way that we couldn't see her," said co-star Jonathan Frakes. "They would not address the fact that the actress was pregnant. It was an interesting problem. You really found yourself more concerned with hiding her with furniture or with your body, or shooting from her boobs up. That was very restrictive."

**"We need more than speculation Mr. Data, we need to know who, what, where, when and why or we may be going to war."** —Riker

#### THE MINDS EYE ★★★

5/27/91. Teleplay by Rene Echevarria. Directed by David Livingston.

In this 24th century retelling of THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, Geordi is cast in the Laurence Harvey role and, who would have thought, Data is Frank Sinatra? La Forge is brainwashed by the Romulans to assassinate a Klingon governor to undermine the alliance between the Federation and the Empire. The Angela Lansbury schemer is a Klingon traitor named Kell, played ably by Larry Dobkin. The potentially riveting story is undermined by a weak ending in which Data unravels the Romulan plot all too easily. Producer David Livingston's freshman outing as director is distinguished by the dramatic use of Geordi's visor point-of-view and by some eerie and unsettling moments aboard a Romulan warbird as vicious Romulan Centurion Taibak (John Fleck) reprograms Geordi into a killing machine.

"I rented THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE and watched it on two successive weekends and took

**Who was the mystery Romulan plotter kept in shadows, sounding suspiciously like Denise Crosby?**



# THE NEXT GENERATION

## THE MAKING OF "BEST OF BOTH WORLDS"

*The story behind the show that led the fans to regard the classic cast as "the old generation."*

By Mark Altman

THE NEXT GENERATION's fourth season kicked off with the conclusion of "Best of Both Worlds," the series' first two-part episode since its debut as a two-hour TV movie. It had been a long, hot summer for STAR TREK fans, left hanging by the cliffhanger ending of Part I, which capped the show's triumphant third season with what many consider to be THE NEXT GENERATION's finest episode. "A lot of people were involved with the decision to do a cliffhanger, and the idea of what it was going to be," said executive producer Rick Berman. "It cost a little bit more, but the studio was willing to let us have a little bit more."

Thanks to a sterling script by executive producer Michael Piller in which Picard is captured and absorbed as a member of the collective intelligence known as the Borg, a fearsome cybernetic alien race, the extras afforded by Paramount amounted to a show boasting the excitement and entertainment quotient of a feature film, with the production values to match.

The Borg had been introduced in "Q Who," itself a smashing second season episode written by then executive producer Maurice Hurley. Piller and his writing staff had grappled most of third season—unsuccessfully—with ide-



Picard as Locutus, captured and absorbed as a member of the Borg, a seemingly unstoppable cybernetic super-race out to subjugate the Federation.

as on how to bring the Borg back. "People here felt they were boring because there was no personality you could sink your teeth into," said Piller. "Because they are all 'one,' there is no spokesman or star role." Whenever the Borg came up in production meetings the suggestion was always to create a "Queen Bee" character to give it a handle. Piller, however, resisted the idea of conventionalizing the Borg's alien menace.

"To me there was something special and frightening about the Borg that their lack of character brought," said Piller. "For a show that dwells and specializes in character to be challenged and possibly destroyed by a characterless villain seemed to me to be a special kind of threat. But when we started talking about the cliffhanger and the Borg, we really did talk about who was

going to be the 'Queen Bee.'"

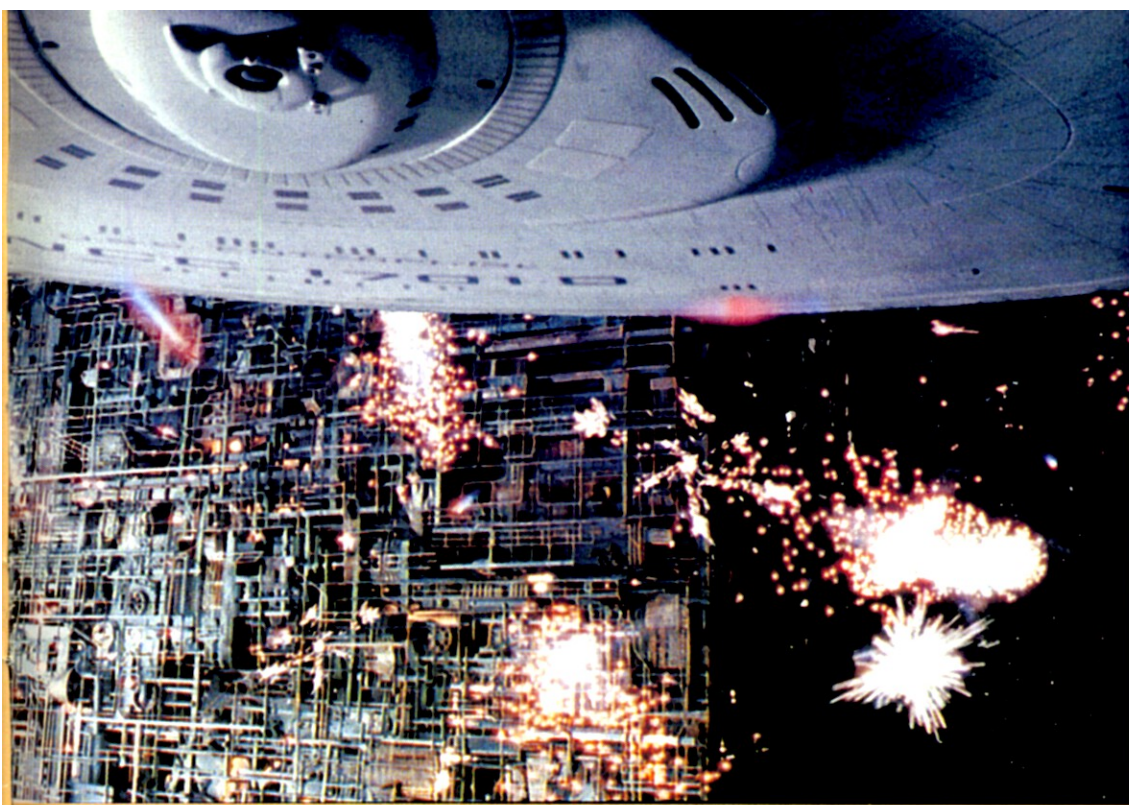
It was Piller who came up with the notion of a "King Bee," transforming Picard into the Borg known as Locutus, who was to act as their interface with humankind as they conquered and subjugated the Federation. An early draft had both Data and Picard taken and combined as a Borg. Noted Piller, illustrating the crucial dynamic of the show's writing staff meetings in forging consistently good shows, "Someone asked, 'Why would they do this?' We

didn't have a good answer, so we dropped that."

The challenge in writing the show for Piller was to keep the space opera elements from dwarfing the human drama, which has been STAR TREK's franchise. Riker served as the dramatic thread for the epic canvas Piller was weaving, concentrating on the officer's dilemma to accept his own captivity on another ship or remain with the Enterprise. The theme was inspired in part by a personal decision Piller himself was wrestling with—whether to remain with STAR TREK or move on.

"Good writing usually draws upon something that is meaningful to the writer," said Piller. "At the end of last year I had decided *not* to return to STAR TREK. Rick [Berman] and Gene [Roddenberry] had asked me to come back because things were going very well.





The Enterprise launches an attack on the Borg ship at the conclusion of "Best of Both Worlds, Part II," excitement and high drama that put Paramount's rival feature film series to shame, a turning point in the way STAR TREK fans regarded the series.

But I had many other things I wanted to do. I wanted to write features and create my own shows. I had always told myself that I wouldn't commit long term to anything. But as I was sitting writing this script I found myself in the position of Riker, who was trying to decide whether he was going to leave the ship or not. Much of what happened to him in Part I was about what was going on in my head."

In one scene, Riker confides to Troi in Ten Forward about whether he is just afraid of the "big chair." Noted Piller, "He comes to the realization that ambition isn't everything. If you're happy and comfortable and find the rewards in the people you work with, that's something that counts for a great deal. We push ourselves and push ourselves and sometimes it is good to do that. It has certainly been healthy for me all my career. But there are also times when you sit back and enjoy your success, and being with the people you love. That was really me speaking through Riker."

Ultimately what emerged from Piller's word processor was one of the most effective hybrids of action/adventure

**“A lot of people were involved in the decision to do a cliffhanger. It cost a little more, but the studio was willing to let us have it.”**

**— Producer Rick Berman —**

and character drama STAR TREK has ever achieved. The episode maintains a dark and somber mood and prominently features Elizabeth Dennehy as Lt. Commander Shelby, a Riker antagonist whose personality is more akin to that of a dog-eat-dog '80s stockbroker than the bright and cheery Mouseketeers usually found in THE NEXT GENERATION's 24th century. "Piller's got an angst-ridden side to him," said Berman, the series' final arbiter. "The angst that we put into that show we did within the guidelines of Gene's universe."

Creating the character of Shelby was actually the key in developing the episode's dramatic focus. "We had no idea it was a Riker story when we started," said Piller. "I came up with the idea of having the Shelby character come onboard

to challenge Riker. That seemed to play into the Riker ambitions and the conflict over whether to take another job, and that builds into the issue of whether or not he is big enough to fill the "big chair."

It was the power of the Shelby/Riker story that drew actress Elizabeth Dennehy to the role. "When I got offered this part, my agents were trying

to persuade me not to take it because the money was so bad," said Dennehy. "I was dying to do it. It's a great character. You got to see somebody who was sweet and young-looking be a real ball-breaker."

Dennehy, who had never seen STAR TREK, old or new, landed the part after reading for Berman, Piller and director Cliff Bole. "That's the bitch about this business," noted Dennehy. "They don't cast you and then direct you. They direct you and then cast you. The most time I ever rehearsed the character was when I was auditioning for it. After I auditioned, before my callback, I spoke to Cliff on the phone and he gave me directions. I went in, did the callback and got the part. If I hadn't already had the character I wouldn't have gotten the role."

thrilled."

Kolbe, who will be returning next year for his fourth year of work on STAR TREK, is excited about coming back to work on the series. "Personally, I love the show and am looking forward to going back into outer space," said Kolbe. "I love the crew. I love the cast. It's rare that you have that many actors and actresses without having any major problems. We have a lot of fun. There's a lot of laughing. As a matter of fact, there's too much laughing going on, especially with Jonathan and Brent."

"I'm a big Kolbe fan," said Frakes of the director. "He's a riot on the set too. He's one of the guys I went to seminars with [to train as a director]. There are some shows where you need levity. When the show is light you play it in the scenes. But I remember how silly we had to be when Denise [Crosby] got killed-off. Patrick ran across the field singing 'the hills are alive.' That's an episode where we were all crying as our characters and ourselves. I'm the morale officer. Sometimes I'm guilty of being an asshole on the set and then I see someone else misbehaving on the set when I'm directing and I say, 'Oy, Frakes, you've dug your own grave.'"

A scene that consistently elicits guffaws among the cast

Elizabeth Dennehy as Shelby, the ballsy Borg expert of "Best of Both Worlds," briefly considered as a series regular.



notes and studied it because I think it's John Frankenheimer's best film," said Livingston. "I'm kind of hyper and nervous and uptight and I had always been afraid of directing, but I was thrilled. I had the best professional time of my life." Keeping an eye on the bottom line, while STAR TREK's budget watchdog had fun directing was Livingston's assistant, Merri Howard. "She ran a tight ship," said Livingston. "You sure get a different perspective [directing.] I used to say that directors have the conscience of a rattlesnake."

**"I would be delighted to offer any advice I can on understanding women—when I have some, I'll let you know."**  
—Picard

#### IN THEORY

★★½

5/27/91. Written by Joe Menosky & Ronald D. Moore. Directed by Patrick Stewart.

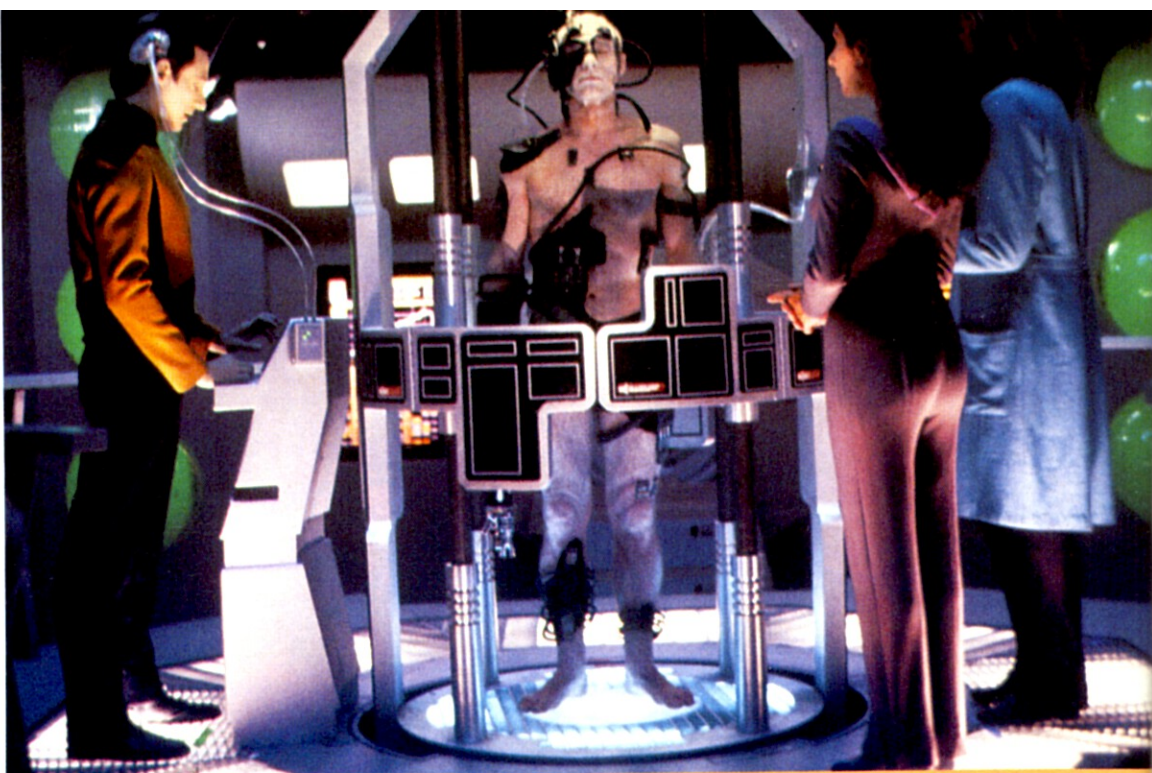
The long-anticipated Data love story is consummated by the show's two executive story editors, Ron Moore and Joe Menosky. Enterprise cadet, Jenna (Michele Scarbelli), on the rebound from a bad relationship, falls for the didactic Data, the stoic android devoid of emotion. In theory, that should be enough of a story for one episode, but as we've seen time and again, an inane "sci-fi" B-story is added to the mix in which the Enterprise is passing through a phasing nebula and parts of the ship are dematerializing in and out of existence. The dynamics of Data's interpersonal relationship with Jenna are far more interesting and compelling. The endearing android has handled love relationships far more adeptly in the past ("Ensigns of Command") and demonstrated that he can handle emotional situations for good ("The Offspring") or ill ("The Most Toys"). Brent Spiner is superb as Data, as always, contributing a particularly strong performance in which he ends up quoting old movies and alienating his new



Jenna (Michele Scarbelli) with soulmate Data in "In Theory," Patrick Stewart's directing debut.

love. Less impressive is Patrick Stewart's maiden voyage as a director. With the exception of an ingenious and creative ending, Stewart isn't up to the difficult demands of visualizing a "bottle show" set entirely aboard ship.

The captain turned to his first officer for advice when he decided to take the helm of an episode. "We had a couple of conversations," said three-time director Jonathan



The show's too neat wrap-up, Data uses the recaptured Picard to tap into the Borg group mind and put them to sleep. Noted executive producer Michael Piller, "I was just pleased to figure out how to defeat them. When I was writing it I had no idea."

The lessons learned in producing "Q Who?" second season (21:2:28) served in part as a dry run in mounting the complex two-parter. "The technical part of figuring out how to stick on all this tubing to the Borg was a big deal," said producer David Livingston. "The R & D, so to speak, was really done on 'Q Who?'"

Despite the excitement of a bigger show, during filming Dennehy noted how the cast and crew seemed glad to put another year of STAR TREK behind them. "It was the last show of the season," said Dennehy. "Everyone was really bored and kind of antsy and dying to get done."

After eight days of rigorous shooting, principal photography on "Best of Both Worlds, Part I" concluded and the season wrapped. Noted Livingston, "We took a big piece of plastic and covered the set and walked away."

While the Borg sets lay idle on Stage 16, collecting dust, the cast and crew enjoyed their summer hiatus and fans pondered what would happen in the second part of the saga. "When we finished the first half, we had no idea what the second half would be," said Berman. "With a little help from me, Michael Piller resolved it." One of the reasons the writing staff avoided doing

Borg shows was that it was tough to pit the Enterprise against an omnipotent, unbeatable entity and stay alive for another episode. Piller had put off thinking about how he was going to write himself out of the corner he had maneuvered himself into in Part I.

"It was after my contract was signed," laughed Piller, about facing up to the task. "I never try to think of these things until I have to. I'm a very instinctive writer. The people I don't work well with are the people who need all the answers laid out before they start writing. I find the discovery process is what the life of scripts is about. You need to have the broadstrokes and a direction so you know where you're going. Television is too expensive and proceeds too quickly to run all the way down the road only to realize you don't have anything when you get to the end. But I honestly believe that you let the characters take you. Just listen to what the voices are saying when you write a script because, ultimately, you'll find wonderful things. The danger, of course, is when you get a block. You can't figure out what the hell they're trying to say!"

With the cast and crew of THE NEXT GENERATION as much in the dark as anyone about the outcome of the Enterprise's confrontation

with the Borg, rumors were rampant. Dennehy thought Shelby was destined to die, saving Picard, but acknowledged that there was speculation that contract negotiations between Patrick Stewart and Paramount were stalled, raising the possibility of a Picard-less fourth season, with Riker in command of the ship and Shelby as his first officer. "Nobody knew who was going to come back," said Dennehy. "They had to go through all the contract negotiations and people kept thinking Patrick was leaving and Jonathan was going to take over."

Livingston returned to the Paramount lot in late July of 1990, and, as the producer charged with mounting the show's physical production, was perhaps more curious than most about how Piller, in the throes of writer's block, was going to wrap it all up. "He had been agonizing over it and all of a sudden it gelled for him," recalled Livingston. "He came in with a big smile and said, 'I solved it!' This was something we were going to shoot in a couple of days. I said, 'That's good. I'm glad you did that!' He resolved it very imaginatively, and Cliff [Bole] did a great job shooting it."

Filming proceeded smoothly, thanks to the experience gained

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is the inevitable shaking of the ship caused by phaser fire and other space hazards. "I've got that down now," said Marina Sirtis. "It was kind of embarrassing in the beginning." Noted Dennehy, "When the ship gets hit they give you a cue, '1-2-3,' and you have to move and throw yourself. I felt like I was doing a silent movie. It was so funny it was hard to keep a straight face. The cast has it calibrated. They ask, 'How do you want this, a three?' They all know the difference between what a three and a six and a nine is. Then they have to decide, 'Do we go left-right-left or right-left-right?' It's one of those situations where you think, 'This is my career and I'm playing cowboys and indians.'"

Piller is philosophical in addressing the past year and what the future holds. "You have to give a lot of value to the ambitions when you're doing a weekly series," said Piller. "If we did not achieve our own goals it was not for lack of trying."

Director Les Landau is optimistic about THE NEXT GENERATION's future and feels that even if TREK must endure the loss of any more of its characters who choose to pursue other work, the show will continue. "I think we have to go back to the original idea and concept," said Landau. "Gene [Roddenberry] created the model for what STAR TREK is and will continue to be and he has proven that it will exist on its own forever. I would hate to see the Enterprise lose Captain Picard, Number One, Data, [Dr.] Beverly [Crusher], Troi or Geordi, but the idea, the universal concept of what STAR TREK is about will endure because it's a timeless story. What Gene created, Rick [Berman] has followed up on, and Michael [Piller] puts down in words, will endure forever because we're dealing with universal themes about the human condition."

**“Must we compare it to the original and ask, ‘Will it last as long?’ One thing you can say about the original is they got there first.”**

**— Producer Michael Piller —**



Recurring Romulan villain Tomalak (Andreas Katsulas) menaces Riker in fourth season's "Future Imperfect."



Only a writer who spent some time in the 25th century—David Carren also worked on BUCK ROGERS—could appreciate the difference of STAR TREK's approach to the 24th century. "BUCK ROGERS was a romp," said Carren. "No one took it seriously, probably to its disadvantage. It's amazing how a show set in the 25th century could date so quickly. That's the problem with a lot of those shows. It was a little kids' show while STAR TREK is a show that thinking adults and children can watch, everyone can get a little something out of it. Hopefully, it will wear as well as the original show did, which is still watchable today even with the limited special effects and really cardboardy sets."

As for THE NEXT GENERATION's future in the pantheon of pop culture phenomenon, TREK's creators are wary of comparing its long-lasting impact to that of its progenitor, but are optimistic about its future. "I wouldn't presume to say how this series will be

looked at 25 years from now," said supervising producer Jeri Taylor. "What we try to do is put out the best possible product we can, week after week, with respect to telling good stories and making statements about truth and humanity. We deal with issues that are current, contemporary and profound, but we always do it in a somewhat oblique way, and come at it from an angle so that it's not right on the nose. Years from now maybe some of those things will seem dated. I think for us to have the same kind of place in the popular culture as the old series does it's going to have to go through the years of repeats and the coming of age of the young people now who watch the show and grow to maturity with that as part of their growing experience. The public determines what they will seize onto and how they will respond

to it and I think history will judge, but I suspect they will judge us kindly."

As THE NEXT GENERATION attracts a whole new generation of fans to STAR TREK, the show is beginning to exceed the popularity of even the original series. "I don't think it would have been worth doing this show if I felt it was a passing fancy," said Piller. "Must we compare it to the original STAR TREK and say, 'Will it last as long?' The one thing you can say about the original is they got there first. It's like comparing the moon landing to the first guy who got into space. We've gone farther and in new ways and different explorations than the original show did, but that was a phenomenon. I believe we will become one with that show in people's memories in the future. I believe STAR TREK is a universe that continues and there will be an additional show someday that will become part of this same universe. It is its own TREK. I think it will continue and last, and I am extraordinarily proud to be a part of it." □

Frakes. "He was fabulous and took to it beautifully. He's a very sensitive man and he did a great job. He was also lucky that he got a Data show as his first. Brent really is an incredible actor with unbelievable range and technique. He's certainly the show's most popular character. It's a real plus to get that combination."

## REDEMPTION

★★★

6/17/91. Written by Ron Moore. Directed by Cliff Bole.

The conclusion of a trilogy chronicling Worf's Klingon dishonor, beginning with third season's "Sins of the Father," and continued earlier this season in "Reunion." The Enterprise returns to the Klingon First City so that Picard can fulfill his role as arbiter of the Rite of Succession, installing Gowron (Robert O'Reilly), as ruler of the High Council, as Worf attempts to clear his family name.

The restoration of Worf's family honor in a brief scene seems almost like an afterthought, hurriedly shot before wrapping production on the season. The turmoils of Klingon politics is made fascinating in the script by executive story editor Ron Moore, though attempts at exposition to clue in the uninitiated result in some exceptionally stilted dialogue. The show works best in its exploration of the Picard/Worf command dynamic even if it misses the epic Shakespearean quality of its *King Lear*-like premise.

Rather than end on a high note—Worf beaming off the Enterprise, having resigned his commission—the penultimate revelation of Denise Crosby as a Romulan plotter, hinted at earlier in the season in "Mind's Eye" (see page 48), seems merely hokey. If this indeed proves to be the return of Tasha Yar to the series, as has been rumored in fan circles for months, it's a betrayal of the high dramatic standards the show has set its last two years.

The episode makes effective use of a new Klingon super-starship, an improvement over the customary use of stock footage from STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE. The model was lobbied for by post-production supervisor Peter Lauritson and first seen earlier in the season in "Reunion." "It's a great model," said producer David Livingston. "We put money into each season to do refurbishing, and what we got out of fourth season was the new cruiser."

**Worf (Michael Dorn), abandoning his old shipmates to pursue a higher destiny, saving the Klingon Empire.**



# SCANNERS

## More psionic killers and exploding heads, minus horror auteur David Cronenberg.

By Ian Johnston

Ten years after the first film—twenty years in movie time—those powerful telepaths whose “thoughts can kill” are still on the run in the streets of Montreal, and still battling pesky humans, meddling doctors, head-popping psychopaths, production problems and the spectre of the MPAA. The only thing missing from *SCANNERS 2: THE NEW ORDER* is the man who started it all, David Cronenberg. He won't talk about the film. And with the exception of a “based on characters created by” credit line, the celebrated filmmaker has had nothing to do with this \$5 million project. Triton Pictures picked the Canadian Malofilm Production for U.S. distribution, and opened the film in test markets last June.

Rene Malo, president of Malofilms, acquired the sequel rights to Cronenberg's film when he bought the assets—including *SCANNERS*—of producer Pierre David's Filmplan, which produced the original. Malofilm opened *SCANNERS 2* theatrically in Canada last May, coinciding with the video distribution of the first film. And Malofilm has already finished making a follow-up called *SCANNERS 3: THE TAKEOVER*.

David, who produced *SCANNERS* and co-produced *SCANNERS 2* with

Smithson makes up Raoul Trujillo as Drac, the evil, mentally disturbed Scanner bent on world domination.



Mike Smithson's exploding head effects rig (l to r): Smithson and crewmembers Steve Frakes, Ryal Cosgrove, Andrew Campbell, Mark Matre. Inset: The gelatin head, sculpted by Smithson, painted by Matre.



Malo, is the only veteran of the Cronenberg film returning on the sequel. David, who produced several early Cronenberg efforts including *THE BROOD* (now also owned by Malofilm), said he was also involved in the development of a *SCANNERS* TV series in the early '80s that “went nowhere.”

Charged with the unenviable task of following up a Cronenberg movie is first-time director Christian Duguay, a highly respected D.O.P. whose only significant directing credit came from helming episodes of the U.S./French TV series *CROSSBOW: THE ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM TELL*. The 32-year-old Duguay—who admitted to having little interest in the horror or science fiction genres—said he initially turned down *SCANNERS 2*. “I didn't like the script at first,” he said. “It was Rene Malo who convinced me I could lend it my own vision, my own insanity.”

Duguay described *SCANNERS 2* as a simple “good versus evil story,” which uses the first film merely as a springboard. Anyone hoping the sequel will clear up the original's muddled conclusion will be disappointed. The story is set several decades after *SCANNERS* and features none of the original characters. The only link in the script by B.J. Nelson is friendly country vet David Kellum (David Hewlett), the

son of *Scanner's* Cameron Vale and Kim Obrist from the first film, who is unaware of his heritage and untapped mental powers.

Mike Smithson was hired to supervise a ten-member make-up and effects team for the sequel when the supervisors on the original film—Chris Walas and Stephen Dupuis—proved unavailable. Smithson, given just two months of preparation time, found that his first job was paring down the effects. “It was unbelievable,” said Smithson. “Heads were blowing up all through it. There was no way it could be done in that amount of time.”

Smithson did contribute one head explosion to be sure—an early scene in which Hewlett

discovers his awesome power—but sought to come up with other more original manifestations of the *Scanners'* force. In one climactic scene that recalls *SCANNERS'* closing battle between Vale and Revok, five good *Scanners* link their minds together against chief evil *Scanner* Peter Drak. A full-sized, articulated puppet of Drak is tossed about the room, driven into convulsions, and finally implodes under the mental weight of the attack. “It was about as ambitious as we could get in two months,” said Smithson. “We did as much experimenting as we could. We really had to jump on it. None of the departments had any time at all.”

The film was shot in Montreal in December of 1989, with temperatures pushed by the windchill factor to forty below zero during the eleven-week shoot. The frigid weather actually shut down production for a day. “It was tough,” said Hewlett, who is appearing in his second David/Malo co-production. Hewlett played the creepy teen in their well-received psychological thriller *PIN*. “We got hit with some major weather. When you get to forty below, the film breaks.”

According to Hewlett, the director's talent as a steadicam operator—Duguay did the steadicam work on Paul Mazursky's *ENEMIES: A LOVE STORY*—came in

continued on page 61

# FILM RATINGS

## BLACK MAGIC WOMAN

Directed by Deryn Warren. Vidmark, 4/91, 91 mins. With: Mark Hamill, Apollonia, Amanda Wyss.

FATAL ATTRACTION, but with voodoo dolls. Fairly well-done for all that, until a rather abrupt "twist" ending. Mark Hamill is a slick L. A. art dealer who two-times his girlfriend/partner (Amanda Wyss) with the luscious Apollonia. But when Hamill dumps her, Apollonia not only slashes his tires, she apparently also puts a curse on him. Hamill is convincingly smarmy and then (as the curse takes hold) convincingly wasted in appearance (there is a not-so-deeply hidden AIDS allegory here). The climax seems to vindicate Apollonia (who was too sympathetic to be a real witch, anyway) in ambiguous fashion. Director Deryn Warren handles the suspense scenes well, and there is almost no reliance on gore or special effects. Production values are good, and the script scores with some neat dialogue. ●● David Wilt

## CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH: PART II SUBHUMANOID MELTDOWN

Directed by Eric Louzil. Troma, Inc., 3/91, 99 mins. With: Brick Bronsky, Lisa Gaye, Lesa Rowland.

Should have been titled SUBHUMANOID LET-DOWN. There's an attempt here to recreate the tacky freneticism of the first film, but it just isn't working. Partly, it's because someone at Troma seems to think that the wall-to-wall narration is a lot cuter than it actually is. Partly, it's because director Eric Louzil's idea of a punchline is to zoom in on some coed's string-bikini'd butt. But mostly, it's because the producers have abandoned a truly ticklish

idea—that the Tromaville Institute of Technology (check that acronym!) would offer as part of its curriculum an opportunity for students to maintain and run their own nuclear power facility—in favor of a less-inspired plot line about the breeding of slave-labor "subhumanoids" in the school's basement. Nowhere does this reach the delirious, offensive heights of the original. Admire the title, skip the movie. \* Dan Persons

## THE CHURCH

Directed by Michele Soavi. South Gate Ent. (video), 4/91, 101 mins. With: Asia Argento, Hugh Quarshie, Tomas Arana, Feodor Chaliapin.

Italian horror luminary Dario Argento produced and co-wrote this surprisingly dull rehash of yet another demon story, originally intended as DEMONS III. After a ten-minute prologue showing Teutonic Knights killing a village of people suspected of being demons, an interminable amount of time is spent in the present before the first demon reappears, triggered by the greed of librarian Hugh Quarshie, searching for treasures in a cathedral built above the villagers' mass grave. A group of tourists gets trapped inside as the demons are unleashed (the standard Argento formula) and meet with various grisly ends. The cathedral itself is genuinely creepy with threatening hooded statues, hellish frescos and cavernous, dripping ruins. But the narrative is a mess. Cast members disappear from the action for pointless cutaways and attempts at humor. Sergio Stivaletti's demon makeups are interesting, but some are seen so briefly, even in this unrated version, as to be almost subliminal. ● Judith Harris



Mark Hamill, wasted by voodoo in BLACK MAGIC WOMAN.

## DR. M.

Directed by Claude Chabrol. CORI Films, Intl., 1991, 112 mins. With: Alan Bates, Jennifer Beals, Jan Niklas.

Claude Chabrol's homage to Fritz Lang's DR. MABUSE films turns out to be a not very thrilling thriller. Chabrol's portrayal of Berlin before the dismantling of the Wall is grim and effective, including Doom-and-Gloom rock clubs with Mekong Delta playing a punk-metal-trash version on Musorgsky's "The Hut of Baba Yaga" from *Pictures at an Exhibition*. But Chabrol's mystery unwinds at a criminally slow pace. Best example: Alan Bates plays a character named Dr. Marsfeldt, obviously the Dr. M. of the title, yet the film is halfway over before Chabrol reveals that Bates is in fact the mastermind behind the subliminal brainwashing responsible for a rash of suicides—and the director actually expects us to be surprised by the revelation. Bates does a professional job with his role, and Jennifer Beals is well cast as a model whose television ads (unbeknownst to her) trigger the post-hypnotic suggestion of the victims. One wishes this film had turned out better. ● Steve Biodrowski

crumbling family home, a place so garishly decorated it is hard not to laugh at the production design.

Roderick arranges for Ryan to have a little accident and be buried alive. Then he has Molly checked out by the family physician (Philip Godewa), who gleefully reports she's ovulating. When the doctor expresses an interest in Molly, Roderick has him stripped naked, bound and unleashes a hungry rat on his penis. Roderick then notifies Molly she's been chosen to carry on the Usher family line and, when she repels him, he has her drugged and rapes her in the shower. While wandering freely around the many, many secret passages, Molly stumbles across Roderick's loony brother Walter (Donald Pleasance, having a very hard time keeping a straight face). Bodies start to pile up and—surprise!—eventually the house crumbles (the wires are fully visible, only adding to the hilarity). An irritating cop-out ending suggests it was all a dream.

● Judith Harris

## NOTHING BUT TROUBLE

Directed by Dan Aykroyd. Warner Bros., 2/91, 93 mins. With: Chevy Chase, Demi Moore, Dan Aykroyd, John Candy.

A moderately interesting failure, sort of a poor man's Tim Burton, striving to be a weird exercise in black humor but ultimately succumbing to the pressure to be a conventional studio comedy, complete with a guest appearance by a rap group in order to get a little exposure on MTV. The premise is good; the production design is intriguing; and the performances are an appropriate combination of the comic and the grotesque (especially John Candy's silent role in drag). However, director Dan

Aykroyd lacks the necessary craftsmanship; for example: Chevy Chase is a master at providing appropriately baffled reaction shots to the weird happenings, but they're photographed and edited so that it's often hard to tell exactly what he's reacting to; subplots are dropped, and characters disappear for long stretches of time. Still, there are too many scattered good moments to dismiss this as a total failure.

● Steve Biodrowski

## OMEN IV: THE AWAKENING

Directed by Jorge Montesi & Dominique Othenin-Girard. Fox-TV, 5/91, 120 mins. With: Faye Grant, Michael Woods, Michael Lerner, Asia Viera, Madison Mason.

Fox has the nerve to advertise this TV movie as a sequel when it's actually a remake of THE OMEN with a mostly bland, no-name Canadian cast and a sex change for the Antichrist. Instead of Damien, this time it's Delia (Asia Viera), but she still has the same dog bodyguard and self-destructing nanny. Instead of a spooky trip to the zoo, Delia gets taken to a psychic fair where, among other things, she turns all the crystals black; and of course, there's the *de rigueur* beheading, which is barely shown because of TV's graphic standards and practices. Even Jerry Goldsmith's genuinely disturbing Black Mass music has been reorchestrated to be less effective in this tired retreat. An open ending leaves room for more tepid sequels.

● Judith Harris

Oliver Reed in THE HOUSE OF USHER, too healthy-looking and brutish for Poe's Roderick.



Anthony Starke, Leslie Nielsen and Linda Blair in REPOSSESSED.



## THE HOUSE OF USHER

Directed by Alan Birkinshaw. RCA/Columbia Home Video, 4/91, 90 mins. With: Oliver Reed, Donald Pleasance, Romy Windsor.

An extremely sleazy version of the oft-filmed Poe story, made in South Africa in 1988, a production of the notorious Harry Alan Towers. This is one of those films which is so bad it really has to be seen. Oliver Reed, looking far too healthy and brutish, portrays Roderick Usher. He invites a nephew Ryan (Rufus Swart) he's never seen and the nephew's fiancée, Molly (Romy Windsor) to the

# FILM RATINGS

## THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM

Directed by Stuart Gordon. Full Moon Ent., 5/91, 97 mins. With: Lance Henriksen, Rona DeRicci, Jonathan Fuller, Oliver Reed.

A major comeback for Stuart Gordon after the disappointing *ROBOTJOX*. Torquemada (effectively played by Lance Henriksen) is another variation on the usual Gordon villain, whose hidden lusts corrupt his intellect and lead him to commit acts of perverse violence; however, removed from the fantasy context of *Lovecraft*, Gordon's usual turf, such a character's atrocities become almost unbearable. Gordon's trademark black humor provides occasional relief, and he manages to push the torture scenes to the limit without going over-the-top, with excruciating results.

After an effective pre-credit opening, the film gets off to a slow start with an innocuous scene establishing the two ingenues who will fall prey to the Grand Inquisitor; fortunately, things pick up after that, and the tension seldom lets up. After the amount of pain Torquemada has inflicted, the retribution he receives at the conclusion is not quite sufficient, and the film's attempt at an uplifting denouement, though sincere, does not quite succeed at overcoming the grim residue of what preceded. But these are cavils not meant to obscure the film's overall effectiveness. A welcome relief from the often tasteless, tongue-in-cheek approach of most modern horror. As Bela Lugosi said in *THE RAVEN*, "Poe, you are avenged!"

••• Steve Biodrowski

## RAMPAGE

Directed by William Friedkin. D.E.G., 1987. With: Michael Biehn, Alex McArthur, Deborah Van Vlikenberg.

In distribution limbo since the demise of D.E.G., this grim and disturbing film is finally available on laser disc from Japan (with Japanese subtitles, of course—at least the original soundtrack is intact). This true measure of what William Friedkin can accomplish deserves all of the praise that was heaped on *HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER*. After a bloody rampage by a serial killer (Alex McArthur), assistant prosecutor Michael Biehn goes on a rampage of his own, abandoning his liberal ideals in order to obtain a death penalty conviction. What follows is an intense courtroom drama examining the validity of the insanity defense.

Though only marginally a genre effort, the film maintains an atmosphere of appalled hor-

FILM TITLE	●●●●		●●●		●●		●		○	
	MUST SEE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	MEDIOCRE	POOR					
	SB	DG	JPH	BK	GK	DS	DSC			
<i>ALICE</i> /Woody Allen Orion, 12/90, 106 mins.	●●	●	●●	●●	●●	●	●●			
<i>CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIE TOWN</i> / Dan Hoskins, Troma, 2/91, 84 mins.	●●				○	●	●●			
<i>DEFENDING YOUR LIFE</i> /Albert Brooks Warner Bros, 3/91, 112 mins.	●●	●●●		●●●	●●	●●	●●			
<i>DINOSAURS</i> /Michael Jacobs ABC-TV series, 4/91, 30 mins.			●	●	●				○	
<i>DROP DEAD FRED</i> /Ate De Jong New Line, 5/91, 98 mins.				○	●				●●	
<i>EDWARD SCISSORHANDS</i> /Tim Burton Fox, 12/90, 98 mins.	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●		●●●	
<i>EVE OF DESTRUCTION</i> /Duncan Gibbins Orion, 1/91.		○	○	○	●●	●●			○	
<i>HUDSON HAWK</i> /Michael Lehmann TriStar, 5/91, 95 mins.		○			○	●	●		○	
<i>MEET THE APPLIGATES</i> /Michael Lehmann New World, 1/91, 82 mins.		●●	●●●	●		●	●●●			
<i>MISERY</i> /Rob Reiner Columbia, 11/90, 107 mins.	●●	●	●	●●	●●	●●	●●		●●●	
<i>NEVERENDING STORY II</i> / George Miller, Warner Bros, 2/91, 89 mins.			○	●	●	●●			●●	
<i>NOTHING BUT TROUBLE</i> /Dan Aykroyd Warner Bros, 2/91, 93 mins.	●	○	○	●	●●				●	
<i>OMEN IV: THE AWAKENING</i> /Mace Neufeld Fox-TV, 5/91, 120 mins.				○	●	●	○			
<i>THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM</i> / Stuart Gordon, Full Moon Ent., 5/91, 97 mins.	●●●					●●	●●●		●●●	
<i>POPCORN</i> /Alan Ornsby Movie Partners, 2/91, mins.	●	○	●	●	●	●●	●●		●●	
<i>PUPPET MASTER II</i> /David Allen Paramount, 2/91, 89 mins.				●	●		●●			
<i>REPOSSESSED</i> /Bob Logan New Line, 11/90, 84 mins.		○	●	○						
<i>SILENCE OF THE LAMBS</i> /Jonathan Demme Orion, 2/91, 118 mins.	●●●	●●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●		●●●●	
<i>SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY</i> / Joseph Ruben, Fox, 1/91, 98 mins.	●●	●●		●	●	●●	●		●	
<i>STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION</i> / Gene Roddenberry, TV series, 60 mins.	●●●	●●	●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●		●●	
<i>SWITCH</i> /Blake Edwards Warners, 4/91, 103 mins.				○	●				●	
<i>TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II</i> / Michael Pressman, New Line, 3/91, 88 mins.			●	●	●●				●●	
<i>TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY</i> /Anthony Minghella Samuel Goldwyn Co., 5/91, 107 mins.	●●			●●	●				●●	
<i>TWO EVIL EYES</i> /George Romero & Dario Argento, Taurus, 4/91, 105 mins.					●●	●●			●●	
<i>THE VANISHING</i> /George Sluizer Tara, 1988, 107 mins.					●	●●●				
<i>WARLOCK</i> /Steve Miner Triumph, 2/91, 102 mins.	●●			●●	●	●●	●●		●	

SB/Steve Biodrowski DG/Dann Gire JPH/Judith P. Harris BK/Bill Kelley  
GK/Gary Kimber DS/Dan Scapperotti DSC/Dan Schweiger

ror in its search for the root cause of the killer's actions (much of the medical technology from *THE EXORCIST* reappears, in another attempt to determine a physical etiology for evil/madness). The matter-of-fact approach of the few violent moments is appropriately horrible, and the low budget actually lends a gritty, almost pseudo-documentary tone. Surprisingly, despite his usual misanthropic approach to characterization, Friedkin actually manages to inject a note of human pathos into the proceedings, making heart-rending what could have been merely vile. One of the best films of a very erratic career.

though it's hard to imagine much of an audience for it. After this brutal examination of real-life horrors, Friedkin's *THE GUARDIAN* now looks like a relatively timid retreat into fantasy.

•••• Steve Biodrowski

## REPOSSESSED

Directed by Bob Logan. New Line Cinema, 5/91, 84 mins. With: Linda Blair, Ned Beatty, Leslie Nielsen, Anthony Starke.

An okay spoof of *THE EXORCIST* with hundreds of hit-and-miss jokes, parodies and film references. Seventeen years after her exorcism, Nancy (Linda Blair), is re-possessed by the same demon, who enters her through the TV. The

church decides to let television evangelist Ned Beatty tackle the demon on network TV. Worth catching primarily for Leslie Nielsen's performance as Father Mayii, the exorcist who comes out of retirement to rebattle the demon possessing Blair. It's clear writer/director Logan aimed for *AIRPLANE*-type hilarity and equally clear he missed. Still, it's more watchable than *EXORCIST II*.

• Judith Harris

## TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY

Directed by Anthony Minghella. Samuel Goldwyn Co., 5/91, 107 mins. With: Juliet Stevenson, Alan Rickman, Michael Maloney.

A sort of low-key British

variation on *GHOST*, without the murder-mystery plot or the glossy special effects. This romantic-comedy instead focuses on dealing with grief and learning to live on after the death of a loved one. Juliet Stevenson is excellent as Nina, who retreats more and more into her flat after the death of her husband. Alan Rickman, as the dear departed, proves himself capable of playing more than just bad guys. Their relationship, aided by playwright and first-time director Anthony Minghella's script, is actually more well-realized than the one in *GHOST*.

The first third of the film unfolds too slowly in its sincere attempt to portray Nina's grief, but the tone shifts when her husband returns from beyond the grave and inspires her to live again. The pathos is effectively balanced with a sly sense of humor as Nina, at first overjoyed, is soon irritated to find herself hosting not only her late husband, but a household of his dead friends as well, who stay up all night watching videos (apparently, classic films aren't available on the other side yet). Without a doubt one of the most unusual and amusing hauntings ever put on screen, this untenable situation forces her to realize that she must put the past behind her and move on—an ending Minghella manages to pull off without stooping to awkward sentiment.

•• Steve Biodrowski

## WHISPERS

Directed by Douglas Jackson. Live Home Video, 4/91, 93 mins. With: Victoria Tennant, Jean Leclerc, Chris Sarandon, Peter MacNeill.

One of the best books by horror novelist Dean R. Koontz gets made into a bland, disappointing direct-to-video feature. Victoria Tennant is a writer who is attacked in her home by someone she barely knows. When she reports it to the police (Chris Sarandon and Peter MacNeill), they don't believe her because the man's name, Bruno Cleva (John Leclerc), is at home 90 miles away. When Bruno returns, Tennant kills him, but his body is not embalmed and when his grave is dug up his coffin is empty. Bruno continues to threaten Tennant, and is also seen by his bank manager, making a withdrawal several days after his "death." Despite the faithfulness of Anita Doohan's script to the intriguing Koontz novel, the result is flat thanks to Tennant's unemotional performance, which fails to gain any sympathy for her hardly fazed damsel in distress.

• Judith Harris

# REVIEWS

## A witty, surreal attempt to reinvent old myths

### HIGHWAY TO HELL

A Hemdale Film Corporation and Sovereign Pictures presentation of a Goodman-Rosen/Josa High Street Pictures Production. Director, Ate De Jong. Producers, Mary Anne Page & John Byers. Director of photography, Robin Vidgeon. Editors, Todd Ramsay & Randy Thornton. Production designer, Phillip Dean Foreman. Special visual effects, Randall William Cook & Cinema Research Corporation. Special makeup effects, Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. Set designer, Lynda Burbank. Music, Hidden Faces. Sound, Michael P. Redbourn & Richard Shorr. Stunt coordinator, Christine Baur & Jack Gill. Screenplay by Brian Helgeland.

Beezle .....	Patrick Bergin
Royce .....	Adam Storke
Charlie Sykes .....	Chad Lowe
Rachel Clark .....	Kristy Swanson
Clara .....	Pamela Gidley
Adam .....	Jarrett Lennan
Sgt. Bedlam .....	C.J. Graham
Sam .....	Richard Farnsworth

by Steve Biodrowski

Imagine THE WIZARD OF OZ if it had been directed by Alex Cox in a good mood, and you will have some concept of HIGHWAY TO HELL. The film has none of the cynical, punk sensibility that Cox brought to REPO MAN (1984), but Dutch director Ate De Jong does manage a similar sense of hip detachment, which allows him to abandon verisimilitude in favor of surreal humor without ever descending into mere parody. Neither camp nor tongue-in-cheek at the expense of genre conventions, the cast plays straight man, while De Jong is the comedian telling jokes written by scriptwriter Brian Helgeland.

The film's intentions are announced with its opening credits, amusingly superimposed over an unappealing postcard of a desert road ("Greetings from Highway to Hell"). Immediately, a distance is established between the on-



SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY'S Patrick Bergin as Beezle, devil makeup designed by Steve Johnson.

screen events and the audience, which is made to realize it's supposed to sit back and enjoy this movie; from then on, the intelligence behind the camera never seeks to hide itself, and the audience begins eagerly searching the corners of the frame for each new joke tucked away slyly somewhere in the background.

Chad Lowe and Kristy Swanson play it straight and sincere as Charlie Sykes and Rachel Clark, teenagers eloping to Las Vegas. Despite warnings from a friendly gas station owner, Charlie nods off and pulls over on a deserted stretch of road which turns out to be the Highway to Hell. Rachel is abducted by the demonic Hellcop (silently sinister C.J. Graham in a

good Steve Johnson makeup). In the first of many outrageous sight gags, we see that the Hellcop's handcuffs live up to their literal name: a pair of severed hands linked by a chain. Charlie goes back to the gas station for help, and the owner (Richard Farnsworth), who lost his own fiancée on the highway years ago, gives him the knowledge and tools he will need to save Rachel.

The first sign that the film's humor masks fundamentally straight-faced intentions comes when Charlie discovers that the Hellcop abducts only virgins. Though we laugh at Charlie's embarrassed refusal to admit that he and Rachel have not slept together, we don't laugh at their innocence. They may be an old-fashioned couple, but they are not naive Brad-and-Janet types held up for our contempt.

These early scenes setting up the story lack cleverness, though Farnsworth manages to humanize a role which consists mostly of delivering exposition. Fortunately, once Charlie finds himself back on the Highway to Hell, his odyssey becomes a complete delight. The low-budget audaciousness of using the Arizona desert to stand in for the Infernal Regions may not convince us, but it does impress us, especially when it is filled with such an amusing rogue's gallery: Andy Warhol's litter the road with pop-art trash; Hitler claims he is a victim of mistaken identity; and the Good Intentions Company paves the road to Hell with the bodies of damned souls who sinned for a "good" reason ("I only slept with the boss to help further my husband's career").

Among the many demons Charlie confronts on the way to Hell City is Beezle, a seemingly benevolent Triple-A tow truck driver ("Anarchy, Annihilation, Armageddon"), played with suave charm by SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY'S Patrick Bergin. "Beezle" is of course short for "Beelzebub." The Evil One is toying with Charlie, allowing him to rescue Rachel only as part of a plan to tempt her into staying willingly. And Beezle has the perfect bait: a young boy he has adopted



C. J. Graham as the Hellcop, a face carved with scripture, a three-hour makeup job designed by Steve Johnson.

since his parents died in an automobile accident on the Highway to Hell. In the film's climax, Charlie and Rachel will risk their own souls, racing the Hellcop, in order to save the boy.

It is a measure of the film's success that its humor in no way diminishes the suspense of the final chase. Like a modern version of ORPHEUS, it subverts derision which might arise from a pompous rendering by finding the humor in the situation and placing it before the audience, who therefore laugh with the film rather than at it. Not all of it works. Casting Gilbert Gottfried as Hitler seems odd (can you imagine a Jewish Hitler?). And a scene wherein a demon, disguised as Rachel, tries to seduce Charlie falls flat: it's so obviously not the real Rachel, we wonder why Charlie doesn't notice.

More often than not, however, HIGHWAY TO HELL is a witty attempt to reinvent old myths in a new way. Brian Helgeland's triumph as a screenwriter is that he has fashioned a script which, without taking itself too seriously, is nevertheless structurally sound—that is, its plot works without resorting to the lame excuse, "It's only a comedy." Helgeland's intent is ably realized by De Jong, who maintains the film's crazy inventiveness without ever letting it fly out of control. □

A throwaway stop-motion gag by Randy Cook: Cerebus, the three-headed guardian of the gates of Hell, torn between defending his turf or relieving himself on a post.



## DEMON WIND The Horrors of Low-Budget Production

By Frederick C. Szebin

"It was, by far, the most stressful thing I have ever done in my life," said first-time director Chuck Moore of *DEMON WIND*. "It just puts everything else to shame—breaking up with women, having an accident—everything else just pales in comparison to the amount of stress you're under when you make a movie. I lost ten pounds during this production, and I'm not a real hefty guy as it is." For those whose previous diets failed them, Moore's secret to shedding pounds is to be a low-budget filmmaker. *DEMON WIND* was shot on a 24-day schedule in January and February 1989, for just \$500,000.

Moore's initial foray into horror films was 1986's *TWISTED NIGHTMARE*, serving as second assistant to director Paul Hunt, who co-produced *DEMON WIND* with partner Michael Bennett. The producers asked Moore to rewrite *TWISTED NIGHTMARE*, and Moore said he found himself directing much of the picture, although he received no credit for it. Hunt and Bennett were impressed enough with Moore to

Cory (Eric Larson), transformed into a benevolent demon to combat the forces of evil, makeup by Lance Anderson.



First-time director Charles Philip Moore.

ask if he could come up with another horror film. Moore's initial concept was just an image, a demonized girl killing her boyfriend with monstrous fingernails. He built the rest of the script around that.

Recalled Moore, "They approached me about writing a treatment that was suited to use the same

Valencia locations as *TWISTED NIGHTMARE*; a farmhouse, a barn and a service station. I wrote the script with those particular locations in mind, but when we got ready to film, the price of the locations had skyrocketed so much that we couldn't use them. We went all over the Los Angeles area to find locations that would match the script, but we couldn't find any to match the budget. The start date was looming real close."

Quick thinking by Moore saved the day and provided *DEMON WIND* with one of its most intriguing elements. "After location scouting one day, we came back to the office and I said, 'How's this? We won't have a farmhouse or a barn. We'll have the ruins of a farmhouse. The only thing still standing is the door. We'll work it into the script so that the house blows up and when the kids come to see what happened, one of them opens the door. Inside, the house still exists, but only through this magic doorway.' Everybody thought it was a great idea and it ended up stepping the film into a different kind of mythos. It no longer was a 'kids go to camp and die' movie. It was now a movie about magic. I rewrote certain sections of the script to pump that idea up."

PET SEMATARY makeup veteran Lance Anderson, along with key assistant David Atherton, lent their expertise to Moore's production, creating a gaggle of demon-possessed teens and gruesome mechanical effects. Moore found that his rushed schedule didn't allow for much trial and error. "There were days when I shot up to eleven set-ups in forty minutes," he said. "I went into this project knowing that I would need a day to shoot each effect when I would only have a half a day. The schedule board for what had to be filmed and when it



had to be done looked impossible.

"The first day set the tone for the whole shoot," recalled Moore. "We shot for seven hours and when we went to dailies the next morning, there was nothing there. The film stock was bad. I was already scared about directing my first movie. I thought I was going to have a heart attack right there. I was half a day behind on my second day. Later that week, I shot that day's work, plus the lost half day. What originally took me seven hours, I refilmed in two. The way this film got made was that because of the inclement weather, the schedule had to be readjusted constantly. The circumstances of making the film were really arduous."

The coldest temperatures in California history were recorded during production at Thousand Oaks, the film's location. Snow

drifts and gale winds knocked over sets and made moving cast and crew to each location a logistical nightmare. "Each new problem that came up had to be solved with a change in the script," noted Moore. "I was actually rewriting on the set, and a lot of that ended up being some of the neater stuff in the movie. I would make up a scene or a bit of dialogue, tell it to the actors, give them five minutes to rehearse, then shoot."

In Moore's original script, a tree was supposed to fall behind the kids as they approach the farmhouse ruins, as though evil forces were at work. The stunt, simple for a larger production, proved too time consuming on Moore's production schedule. "That gag would have cost me a whole day's shooting," said Moore. "We would have to get a

A demon woman appears out of the fog to cure some of the afflicted, one of the elaborate makeups supplied by Anderson, David Atherton and a four-man crew.





Enjoyable clone of Sam Raimi's EVIL DEAD



Makeup artist Robin Kissner applies blood to C. D. J. "Dan" Koko as the Great Demon. Above: A profile showing Lance Anderson's humpback design.

tree, ship it to location and it would have to be strong enough to use over and over again. It would have required a lot of coordination. All of that made me think that we're not going to get a lot of bang for the buck. I came up with another scene where the kids pass under a nest. The camera zooms in as an egg starts to hatch. But instead of a chick emerging, the egg is full of maggots! It was a much more visceral symbol. We were always trying to think up clever ways to get more for less."

According to Moore, DEMON WIND proved a good seller at the Cannes foreign sales market, where a budget of \$3 million was raised through pre-sales for DEMON WIND II, which Moore is now scripting. Though pleased with his new-found status as a bankable director, Moore is keeping everything in perspective. "The only avenue open to people like me is the low-budget horror film," he said. "Horror films have replaced the western as the staple low-budget genre you can just pump out. There's a huge market for it. It's the easiest way to get into the business, as I well know. I have a science fiction script that would cost a fortune to make. Those things are hard to get launched because you have to convince a lot of executives that it's going to be a great film and a massive hit. But when I see a film like SOLAR BABIES, I begin to wonder. It really amazes me that anyone can take \$20 million and not make a good movie." □

DEMON WIND

A United Filmmakers/Prism Entertainment presentation. 86 mins. Director, Charles Philip Moore. Executive producer, Peter Collins. Producers, Michael Bennett & Paul Hunt. Director of photography, Thomas Callaway. Editor, Chris Roth. Production designer, Don Day. Special makeup effects, Lance Anderson. Music, Bruce Wallenstein. Screenplay by Charles Philip Moore.

Cory Harmon	Eric Larson
Elaine	Francine Lapensee
Dell	Bobby Johnson
Terri	Lynn Clark
Harcourt	Rufus Norris
Jack	Mark David Fritschee
Bonnie	Sherry Bendorf
Great Demon	C.D.J. Koko

by David Wilt

DEMON WIND is a mildly entertaining little film which owes a great deal to Sam Raimi's THE EVIL DEAD—and since Raimi's film was rather obviously "inspired" by NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, that makes it a clone of a clone, generally not much of a recommendation. But in many tangible ways, DEMON WIND is better than THE EVIL DEAD: its overall production values, while not lavish, are certainly more elaborate than the Raimi picture; the actors are more attractive and accomplished; the special effects are more professional and ambitious. However, something about THE EVIL DEAD—perhaps its relentless nihilism or its gleefully ghoulish overkill—made the earlier film a cult hit, while DEMON WIND will undoubtedly sink without a trace.

Perhaps DEMON WIND's greatest liability is its script. The basic elements are cribbed fairly crudely from myriad genre predecessors: a group of young people (four coed couples plus two other males) visit a remote farmhouse that has a strange history; they

find an old book filled with mystic signs; surly, pizza-faced zombies appear; the body count begins, with the victims returning as more pizza-faced zombies; a "final" showdown with the head demon, twist endings galore, and so on. The characters are drawn with broad strokes, and the dialogue is painfully stilted. The plot is overly convoluted, literally crammed with false starts and tangential ideas, and a plethora of loose ends may be observed dangling in the breeze.

For example: a printed title states the prologue takes place in 1931, but all dialogue references in the film refer to 1929: the zombies are kept out of the cabin by some mysterious force which suddenly goes away and there really isn't any "demon wind" in the film—demon fog, a demon barn, demon zombies, a big mean demon, but not much demon wind. The protagonist solves these problems—and many more—by instantly coming up with glib explanations—and when the other characters question this information, he snaps, "I just know."

The plot: Larson (Cory Harmon), after the death of his father, returns to the family farm, which mysteriously burned down in 1929 (or was it 1931?), killing his grandparents. He learns his family had defied a local devil-worship cult, and were cursed as a result. By returning to the farm, he stirs up the whole demonic mess again.

To be fair, there are a number of good things about DEMON WIND. The cast—while composed largely of unknowns—does the best it can with the awkward



Chuck (Stephen Guadros) returns from the dead, makeup by Lance Anderson.

dialogue and situations. Harmon is earnest as the perplexed protagonist. Francine Lapensee, who resembles a young Loretta Swit, is attractive and does the best she can with her stock role, the loyal-but-ineffectual girlfriend.

The film's opening sequence contains some deliberate gross-out makeup effects, but the rest of the picture is relatively tame, with various blood-and-slime spurts, but no really graphic gore. The final demon, however, is fairly impressive in appearance and mean-spirited to boot. Optical effects are somewhat cartoony, but again well-executed within budgetary constraints. Two brief and totally extraneous T & A scenes are rather callously and arbitrarily included.

One of the film's best concepts—although handled simply—is the haunted farmhouse itself. Destroyed by fire, its front wall and door are all that remain. However, when the visitors walk through the doorway, they find themselves in the undestroyed interior of the house. When they walk around the wall, the house is in ruins. Ideas like this, if presented in a coherent story, could have made DEMON WIND more eerie and interesting than it is. As it stands, DEMON WIND is enjoyable enough but instantly forgettable. □

Comic book horror. Cory (Eric Larson), Elaine (Francine Lapensee) and Jack (Mark David Fritschee) confronted by the severed head of Willy (Richard Gabai).



## Writer/Director Dan Hoskins on CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIETOWN

By Steve Biodrowski

What may sound like just another Troma fast-buck knock-off is in fact a ten-year labor of love for Dan Hoskins, writer/director of *CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIETOWN*. Hoskins wrote the script while in college, spent most of the decade looking for a backer, and finally shot the film with independent financing. "The very first work on this I did while going to San Francisco State in 1980," Hoskins recalled. "I was painting houses, which leaves a lot of time to kill, in terms of thinking, and I'd been seeing a lot of George Romero and Russ Meyer films at a local theatre. I thought it would be great to do a combination."

Hoskins went on to graduate work in the cinema department of the University of Southern California, where he completed the script under the title *CYCLE SLUTS VS. THE ZOMBIE GHOULS*. "When I got out of school, my agent sent the script to a lot of places," said Hoskins. "I got some good meetings out of it, but the result was always, 'We can't do this, but we'd like to do something else with you later on.' There was a woman at MGM who said, 'I just wanted to meet the person who wrote this, because every day I get these supposedly

Troma's ad campaign for Hoskins' horror film with "attitude," a blend of George Romero and Russ Meyer.

feminist scripts about annoying, grating female lawyers. It was nice to read a script that I thought was about real women."

Hoskins' script ended up at New World, although the company's doubts about hiring a first-time director prevented the project from materializing. "I don't see the film as terribly subtle," said Hoskins. "But a lot of people, who you would think would get the references and the humor, didn't. I had one very strange meeting with an executive at New World. He was yelling at somebody on the phone and trying to carry on a story meeting with me. Finally, after he slammed down the phone, he turned to me and said, 'First thing: this title—it's too serious.'"

Hoskins wrote a couple of other scripts at New World, including *PRETTY SMART*, which starred Patricia Arquette. The title *BEVERLY HILLS ZOMBIE* was suggested by New World executive Tony Randall, but by the time Hoskins finished the script, Randall was busy directing *HELL-RAISER II*, and New World folded soon afterward.

Hoskins decided to go the independent financing route, with the help of fellow USC alumni Maria Snyder as producer. With the money obtained, the film underwent its first title change during the casting process. *CHROME HEARTS* was deemed a "more palatable" title which would not scare away serious actors. "Just to say we'd done it, we had a number of Playboy Playmates come in to read," said Hoskins. "But the investors, who had final say in casting—if they had a choice between a performance and a body, they went with the performance."

"It made for an interesting five weeks, because you had seven women who took what they were doing seriously and were interested in character development. Unfortunately, when you're in the desert, behind schedule, and everything's going wrong, those are the things you're not able to concentrate on. A lot of the grand ideas about the subtlety of characterization fell by the wayside. They could see that happening, but they were very professional. Luckily, we'd had a rehearsal period, so we were able to discuss where the characters were going, although there wasn't time for that during shooting."



A zombie attacks one of the citizens of Zariah. In Hoskins' satire of small town values, it's difficult to distinguish between the warm-blooded and the cold meat.

Hoskins' script underwent some last-minute revisions prior to shooting. "The first version was much broader and campier," said Hoskins. "Over the years, I tried to pull it in and make the humor a little drier. One of the investors read the first draft and said the latest draft wasn't as funny. I tried to bring back some things from the original draft, so from time to time there are some wild tone swings."

Production took place during October and November, 1988, with interiors built inside a warehouse in Ridgecrest, California. Exteriors of the desert and the highway were shot in and around nearby Ransburg. Hoskins found that, as a writer, he had set himself quite a task to accomplish as a director: night exteriors, complicated makeups (by Ed French), motorcycles, and pyrotechnics. "I can't say there was ever a day when I said, 'I'm really glad to be here,'" admitted Hoskins of the filming. "It wasn't as bad as film school. You go in with shot lists and story boards, and after three hours on the first day you realize you're never going to get what you intended, so your goal becomes, 'Let's just get something on film. We'll shoot master shots; maybe someday we'll do coverage.' You end up with a Jim Jarmusch film by default."

"As the film progresses, any notions of subtlety go out the window. For instance, the script had explosions happening off-screen, and the pyro people said, 'Why don't we show it?' I said, 'It's expensive; it takes time.' They said, 'No, look—we can rig something in ten minutes.' So it gets to the point where you come on the set everyday and say, 'What can we blow up today?' It

looks good in dailies, and it makes you feel good to blow something up.

"We had trouble with the locals in Ransburg, which is one of those towns where people move when they don't want to be around people anymore. At first, they were saying, 'This will be interesting,' but our novelty wore off after three days, and we started getting complaints, which turned into reneging on location agreements, throwing small fireworks, or showing up with guns.

"There was a night when people from a nearby town showed up and decided they wanted to be extras, and they'd been drinking. We said we didn't need extras. They got into the wardrobe room and stole some leather jackets. The police turned up, and it turned out that the townspeople had guns. Rather than thinking, 'Gee, it's good the police showed up!' you think, 'God, I'm going to lose an hour here!' But it turned out the guns weren't loaded.

"The crisis moment for me came one night when we had a lot of extra shots to pick up, because every night that week we'd missed a couple shots. We had to do two major sequences in the desert. We got to the location set-up, and started asking, 'Where's the crane we put the major lighting on?' The location manager had misunderstood and sent the crane to another location fifteen miles away, and there was no way to get it back. I thought, 'We're not going to be able to shoot tonight, and they're going to fire me.' But the lighting crew set up scaffolds and put the lighting on them. We were three hours behind, but we got most of the footage, though it all ended up hand-held because we were moving so fast."



*Damn funny and more than a little subversive*

After the film was shot and edited, Troma decided to pick up the distribution rights. No doubt the title **CYCLE SLUTS VS. THE ZOMBIE GHOULS** seemed ready-made for their brand of publicity. Unfortunately, the title turned out to be the first of many changes at the hands of the ratings board. "The MPAA would not let us use 'slut' in the title, so we pseudo-test marketed a lot of titles, and **CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIE-TOWN** turned out to be the least offensive."

Also, the film had to be submitted three times before receiving an R. "A lot of good stuff ended up on the floor," said Hoskins. "Some place overseas—I don't know where exactly—the uncut version is showing, because when they took it to MIFED we hadn't gone to the MPAA yet. They would point out things that weren't there, that were only in their minds. The second time we submitted it, they not only said, 'Keep trimming,' but they started finding things they hadn't seen the first time."

One shot which doesn't survive in domestic prints is one Hoskins almost didn't bother to shoot. "There's a scene toward the end, in church, where it's implied that the Cycle Slut who's become a zombie emasculates another zombie," said Hoskins. "On the day we shot, the actress said, 'Let's show this.' I said, 'We'll never get it past the MPAA, but what the hell—it'll be fun in dailies.' So I asked the special effects man how to do it. He came back ten minutes later with a package of string cheese and a jar of raspberry jam and stuck the cheese in the jam. In the unexpurgated version, there's a shot of the woman sinking out of frame, a reaction shot of the male zombie, and then you cut to a close-up of the woman chewing this thing in her mouth. It was great because it always got a reaction. Half the people would say, 'That's disgusting!'—thank God it came near the end, or they would have walked out—and half said, 'That's really funny.' We discussed whether or not to submit it. You hear stories about putting some things in you know you won't be able to keep—that's what that was."

Had the film been submitted a few months later, when controversy over the X-rating was leading to the new NC-17, the investors might have considered appealing rather than cutting the film. "For me, it's a question of context," said Hoskins. "There were things

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**CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIE-TOWN**

A Troma Pictures release. 5/91, 84 mins. In color. Director, Dan Hoskins. Producer, Maria Snyder. Executive producer, Arthur Sarkissian. Director of photography, Tom Fraser. Editor, W. O. Garrett. Art director, Timothy Baxter. Assistant director, Rodney McDonald. Special makeup effects, Edward French. Associate producer, James Hardy. Costume designer, Libby Jacobs. Set designer, Beau P. Peterson. Stunt coordinator, Gary Jensen. Pyrotechnics, Joseph Viskocil. Music, Daniel May. Screenplay by Dan Hoskins.

Dede	.....	Jamie Rose
Jewel	.....	Vicki Frederick
Rox	.....	Catherine Carlen
T. C.	.....	Lycia Naff
Jojo	.....	Kristina Loggia
Rusty	.....	Gretchen Palmer
Tanya	.....	Nina Peterson
Lucille	.....	Whitney Reis
Bob	.....	Ed Gale
Ralph	.....	Don Calfa

by Dan Persons

A sort of "Thelma and Louise Join the Wild Ones and Take on the Living Dead at High Noon During a Bad Day at Black Rock." **CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIE-TOWN** is that rarest of all creatures: the good Troma movie. It isn't just that writer/director Dan Hoskins has fashioned a scenario that fulfills the promise of its outlandish title. It's that he has dug a little deeper, and tapped a caustic well of satire that does for small-town insularity what a Johnny Carson monologue does for Dan Quayle's presidential hopes.

After years on the road, the Cycle Sluts biker club is teetering on the edge of total collapse. Elder member Jewel (Vicki Frederick) is feeling the tug of guilt over the child she abandoned to her abusive husband, young T. C. (Lycia Naff) is wondering how a life spent in jeans caked with road-dust is going to help her achieve her stated career goal of rock producer, leader Rox (Catherine Carlen) is suffering from the *angst* that comes from being the only lesbian in a group of profoundly "het" runaways. Not even the combined hostility of the residents of Zariah—a village with a suspiciously high death-rate—is enough to forge a unifying spirit amongst these women. It's going to take something more.

What it's going to take, of course, is the escape of an army of flesh-hungry zombies from a nearby, abandoned mine (don't ask how they got there). In one



The Cycle Sluts (l to r): Jamie Rose, Catherine Carlen and Gretchen Palmer, a toughness that's only leather deep.

long night as disaffected townies cower in their living rooms, the bikers will team up with their kindred spirits—a group of cigarette-smoking, Uzi-toting, attitude-spewing, blind orphans (this is a Troma film, after all)—and battle the undead, rediscovering, in the act, the rebel spirit that burns in the heart of every true, red-blooded Cycle Slut.

Sure, it's stupid. To his credit, writer/director Dan Hoskins doesn't avoid the issue, playing the film for laughs and, generally succeeding. You gotta' love the citizens of Zariah, a populace so detached that their idea of a hot Saturday night is to sit at home amongst the Coleman lanterns and mourn what might have been, or to drink themselves into a stupor at the town's only bar (complete with casket containing yet another corpse). When the dead begin to walk, it scarcely causes a ripple among the inhabitants.

"They're us, they're good people," says the town nurse (Cameron Milzer), barely cognizant of the fact that the "good people" happen to be tearing strips of flesh

from her neighbors. When Hoskins later stages a zombie takeover of the town—the ghouls trying to recreate their former lives by lounging out on porches, assuming the stations of their former jobs, or fruitlessly dragging lawnmowers across the denuded roadbed—one becomes hard-pressed to distinguish between the warm-blooded and the cold meat. In Zariah, the living and the undead deserve each other. So much for America's return to small-town values.

If only Hoskins' directorial style was up to the demands of his subtext. Where his **CHOPPER CHICKS** should have the momentum of a Harley barreling down the blacktop, it more often feels like a Honda caught in midtown traffic. Meanwhile, the Sluts' toughness seems, at best, only leather-deep, more a question of satiric necessity than of any sort of character development. What's needed is a sense that there's a *real* reason for

mothers to hide their sons and for bartenders to begin hoisting baseball bats whenever these ladies turn up. The best Hoskins manages here is a rape scene where the victim quite patently puts up very little struggle. No slap to the actresses involved, including lead Jamie Rose as "sympathetic" biker Dede. It's just that, while these women may talk tough, you get the feeling that if you scratched their surfaces, what you'd find is a collection of Sluts without guts.

Had Hoskins managed to goose the energy level a bit, **CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIE-TOWN** would have been a hoot and a half. As it is, it's still pretty damn funny, and more than a little subversive. "I just don't hack it as a normal," says Dede to her former husband, by way of explaining why she ran away from home. One can identify with the sentiment, and appreciate it as a force strong enough to unite chopper chicks, dwarf undertakers, and blind orphans in a battle against the agents of ignorance and stagnation. To get it across with a fair degree of wit is nothing to sneeze at. □

# STAR TREK

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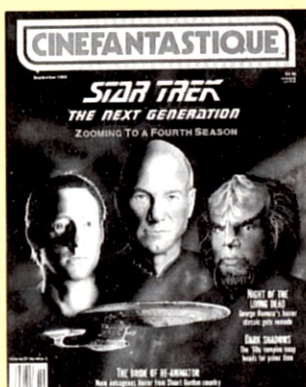
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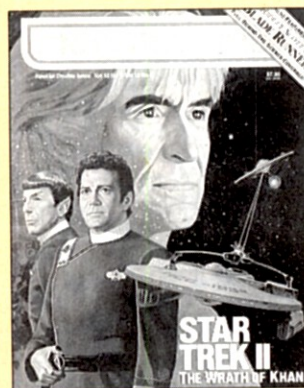
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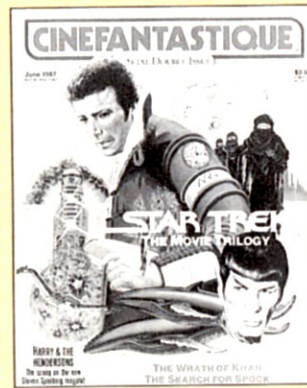
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## FREDDY'S DEAD

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this was Freddy Vision," said Talalay. "Once you add the red-green overlay on the film, you lose a lot of the normal color. For example, Freddy's sweater is bright red and black. Nothing we could do with all the filtration systems could fix it. But it doesn't bother you, because your mind says, 'It's Freddy's sweater.'"

The technicalities of 3-D aside, the real challenge faced by Talalay was how to convince audiences that this is indeed THE FINAL NIGHTMARE. "I think that FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE FINAL CHAPTER stopped people from believing that this could be the last one," noted Talalay. "People just look at you and laugh. At first that bothered me. Then I thought, it doesn't matter. The audience is either going to come, or it's not. New Line's either going to do another one, or they're not. I always thought the only way people would believe it would be final is if we nuked Freddy in the end. People seeing this probably won't say, 'Well, he's dead for good,' but at least we are taking the issue seriously." □

## HANNIBAL LECTOR

continued from page 5

teeth, SILENCE OF THE LAMBS joins left-wing social comment with right-wing underpinnings. The view of evil is classically conservative and deeply biblical. Lector will not be reclaimed by a therapy, Prozac, or the right twelve-step program. For all the references to behavioral science, the Harris books and both MANHUNTER and SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, teach that Lector is simply as evil as sin, period. At the same time, the narrative and dialogue is stalwartly progressive and politically correct: a female professional who solves the case and wastes the killer, a fighting and resourceful kidnap victim. When Jack Crawford uses Clarice as a convenient excuse to bond with the local southern constabulary she confronts him with his chauvinistic tactics. "Point well taken," he replies chastened. The portrayal of the killer, a mincing would-be transsexual, has been criticized by gay groups. Demme dutifully promised to repent with a positive role model in his next film.

The sequel to SILENCE OF THE LAMBS—and as sure as God made little green agents there will be a sequel—had better not turn Hannibal Lector into Freddy Kreuger with a Ph.D. Lector's special appeal is not in what he does, but in what he is, what he represents. Hence, even behind the glass, wrapped tight, head to toe,

and wheeled about on a dolly, everyone is still afraid of him. After Lector's escape, the film's tension lifts and the cruising speed of the narrative shifts down a gear. Out among the citizenry, he might be just another frothing killer racking up a body count, another digit on the FBI's ten most wanted list. The reason Lector was so compelling in his cell, emanating horror, was that the evil he incarnated could not be contained even when behind bars. In his cell, in his mental duels and chilling flirtations with Starling, he's most alive, most terrifying, and most fun to watch. Like revenge, Hannibal the Cannibal is a dish best served raw—perhaps with a side dish of fah-va beans. □

## CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIETOWN

continued from page 59

in the movie that were gleefully nasty—things that made you wince, but you were laughing. I've seen movies get Rs that were ugly and mean-spirited and doing some of the things we were doing. I guess that's an odd argument: to say, "Well, it's a friendly beheading—it's in good humor." □

Despite the hardships and re-editing that somewhat compromised his vision, Hoskins is pleased with the response the film has gotten from audiences and critics. "I'm surprised to find, from the reviews I've read and the responses I've gotten, that more of what I was trying to say came through than I thought—because when I look at it, all I can see are the things I didn't get, things that went wrong. I find that any film, good or bad, develops a momentum after sixty minutes—it's running downhill and you can't stop it. So I like the last half—things start blowing up real good."

Worrying about the loss of subtle characterization in a film which pits female bikers against radioactive zombies may seem odd, but Hoskins never intended his film as a camp send-up, unlike Troma's other releases. "I think Troma's stuff tends to be a little more self-referential," said Hoskins. "The wink and the nudge are a little bit bigger. We were playing it a little straighter. I've never been comfortable with camp. When we took the script around town, my hair would stand on end when people would use the term, because to me camp implies a superiority to the material—that you're laughing at the material—which I never wanted to do. So I tried to keep away from that. The tone I was aspiring to was a Paul Morrissey tone, very deadpan."

The question that remains is: how much room is there for subtlety in a film like this? "Well,

probably none," Hoskins admitted. "The editor and I debated that endlessly. I guess your core audience isn't really going for those things. I think there's room for films with subtle character development and lots of beheadings!" □

## SCANNERS 2

continued from page 52

handy in keeping the film close to schedule. Hewlett said the director frequently eschewed lengthy setups in favor of strapping on the camera himself. "He's like a kid," said Hewlett. "He'd come up with these ideas and if they didn't work, he'd try something else."

During production, Duguay filmed both hard and soft theatrical versions, as well as a non-violent TV version. Duguay noted he wasn't daunted by following in Cronenberg's footsteps. "This story stands on its own," said Duguay, who went on to film *SCANNERS 3* for Malofilm, which has no connection to either *SCANNERS 2* or the original film. "It's a lot slicker and a lot wilder," said Duguay, who spent two weeks of the third film's nine-week schedule shooting in Thailand, on a budget of \$6 million. □

## SHOOTING STAR TREK

continued from page 26

as the buffer and liaison with Rick."

Among fourth season's innovations was the use of ultra-violet lighting on "Identity Crisis," in which Geordi turns into a glowing monster. "We put Levar [Burton] into a body suit permeated with blue veins," said director Winrich Kolbe. "He could hardly move for two days, sitting around in that tight-fitting costume with everything glued on."

Despite the turmoil which has shaken the writing staff over the years, the technical team on *THE NEXT GENERATION* has remained consistent, except for some changes made by Berman at the beginning of third season. It is their devotion to bringing *STAR TREK* to the screen that has been a truly unheralded triumph in reviving the series for the small screen. "What we do is fake," said Livingston. "We work on a show that presents a positive image for the future and says, 'There's hope for all of us.' When you read the headlines, that's reality. Gene's the idealist. We all aspire to be that way, but unfortunately we're not. But that's why a lot of people are on this show and stay here. It's uplifting. We have a good group of people. If this show was *BLADE RUNNER* I don't think the people would last. They'd all be so depressed." □

## BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

continued from page 50

in filming Part I. "We had really worked out all the kinks," said Livingston. "We knew it took forever to do that makeup, so we didn't get burned like we did before, and have the director waiting around for a long time for people to be ready. We had the set and we knew what modifications were necessary to make it more shootable. We were prepared. It worked out great. Cliff [Bole] came in 2½ hours under on that show. It was ambitious, but it's something that we had done before."

The cast had returned four months after production wrapped on Part I and picked up, literally seconds, after where they'd left off. "I watched the tape quite a few times before I went back," said Dennehy. "The hardest thing was remaining the same weight, because my weight goes up and down, and those spacesuits are merciless. I'm sure I put on some weight between the first and second one." Keen observers also noticed a change in Gates McFadden's hairstyle and a number of other subtle differences.

"I thought Part I was much better than Part II," said Piller. "The reason was that Part II had to deliver the goods promised by Part I, and they're not as interesting. The weakness of Part II is there's so much action. I don't like writing action, I don't like watching action, and I don't think *STAR TREK* is about action. It's about characterization. I know Gene [Roddenberry] would agree with me about action, that less is more on *STAR TREK*. We had such a build-up of anticipation for Part II, which I had never foreseen. We really needed to deliver a slam bang episode, and I feel that we did. We had to rescue Picard, beat the Borg and blow up the ship and that's all action oriented. It delivered the goods, but it wasn't a pleasure to write."

For Piller, what pleasure there was came in devising the "master vs. pupil" dynamic which served as the episode's dramatic underpinning. "That's the real juice of the show for me," said Piller. "Is Riker good enough to use his skills to overcome Picard? Some of that was cut out for length, including a scene between Riker and Troi where he expresses his concerns and doubts about Picard. We lost a little characterization because of all the action that had to go in there."

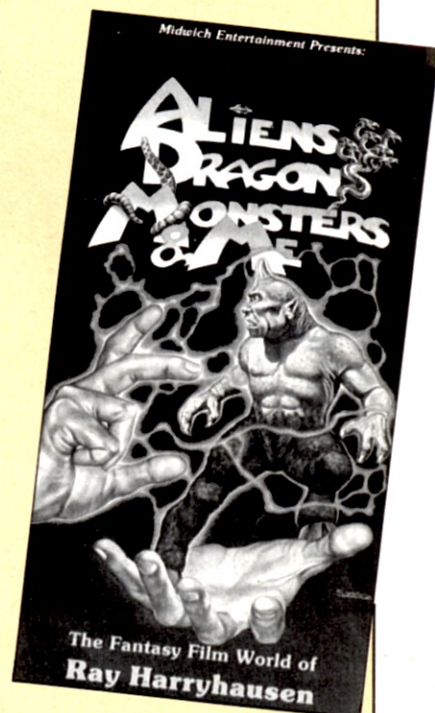
Piller referred to "Family," the episode following "Best of Both Worlds, Part II," as "Part III." Noted Piller, "It's the most effective of all three because it's all character." □

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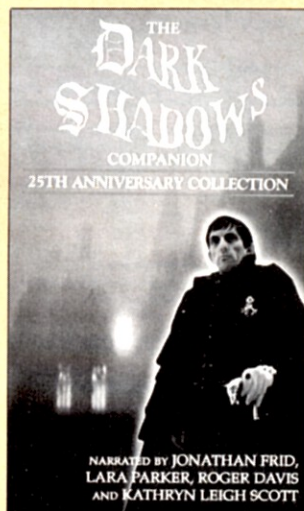
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# LETTERS

## IT'S NOT DEAD, JIM

I hope you folks realize by now that there is going to be a STAR TREK VI, starring the original cast! I personally think the stories that you people ran last year [20:4:5, 20:5:10] about STAR TREK VI being made without the original cast were nonsense and stupid!

You people should check your facts! [Producer] Harve Bennett is gone from Paramount. The so-called "Academy Years" movie, that your writer said was going to be made, never got off the ground. Did you really think that Leonard Nimoy, William Shatner and cast wouldn't make another picture, especially since 1991 marks the show's 25th anniversary?

I would *never* pay to see a STAR TREK movie *unless* the original cast stars. As for THE NEXT GENERATION, it's boring, and you can take that to the bank.

Steve Dover  
Columbus, OH

[For the record, our articles never said that STAR TREK VI wouldn't feature the classic cast, only that Paramount was considering such a move.]

## MORE KERNELS ON "POPCORN"

Another inaccuracy in your article [21:5:28, 21:1:62] concerning my "derailment" as director of POPCORN. [Producer Howard] Hurst is quoted as saying that I "spent much of the first three weeks shooting the film's '50s style vignettes." The fact is that I began on Monday, October 16, 1989 and had completed them by Tuesday, October 24, a total of eight days. From October 25 to November 10, I worked on the main body of the film, four weeks in all. By that time, post-production had been completed on the mini-movies to re-shoot them before a live Ward Theatre audience.

Alan Ormsby  
Van Nuys, CA 91401

## AS THEY SAY ON SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, "NEVER MIND!"

In Thomas Doherty's article, "What's Wrong with Stephen King?" which seems mostly to view the writer from an admiring, if pedagogically critical stance ("You could do better, Stevie, if

you'd only live up to your potential" seems pretty much to be the message), Doherty refers to the talented Elmore Leonard as "a first-class wordsmith." Leonard, by virtue of the genre he's made his recent success in, is a whole lot more acceptable to the intelligentsia, which has come to regard crime fiction with fond tolerance. But the truth is, he's emphatically no more (and no less) a "first-class" wordsmith than is King.

King is a wonderfully fascinating writer *as a writer*, and he is good. He's excessive at times, but so is *Cinefantastique*, and frankly, though I enjoy you a great deal, the caliber of the writing you offer can be pretty wince-making. Additionally, such a categorization of King as not "first-rate" seems somewhat mean-spirited, if not downright hypocritical, for a magazine that has gotten so much mileage out of him. I realize, of course, that we can celebrate all sorts of writers and filmmakers, including Stephen King, for their achievements, quirks and innovations, and that they don't have to be "first class" to qualify for discussion, but exalting Elmore Leonard over King seems quite wrong.

Michele Slung  
Washington DC 20010

[Thanks for leaping to King's defense. However, we never said

*King wasn't a first-class writer, nor did we exalt Elmore Leonard at his expense. Doherty wrote, "Compared to the screen adaptations accorded a first-class wordsmith like Elmore Leonard, King has lucked out." And he has.]*

## STEPHEN KING, MISTRANSLATED

I am a foreign exchange student from Italy who loves horror movies, and really appreciated your issue on my favorite writer, Stephen King [21:4]. In your article "On Movie-making with Dino DeLaurentiis [page 40], there is a photo of King on the set of MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE wearing a T-shirt with an Italian legend. The actual translation is, "What the dick are we doing here?," not "fuck," as you indicated. I know, it's a small point, but a dick is a dick . . .

Matteo Bittanti  
Byron, IL 61010

[King was said to have worn the shirt for the benefit of his producer, Italian film mogul Dino DeLaurentiis. The reported translation was King's own . . . perhaps his Italian is a little rusty.]

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## BATMAN II

continued from page 6

what you expect. He's not into mega-budgets so much as unusual ways of how to approach filmmaking. Other studios hide their enormous budgets while Mario at least admits to them. Filmmaking isn't about that with him and I admire his weird pioneer spirit."

Then there's THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, a Disney feature project Burton has been desperate to make ever since the Burbank native began his career working at the studio in animation design. It's about a skeleton that kidnaps Santa Claus because he's sick of Christmas getting more publicity than Halloween. "That's taken such a long time to get together and will take even longer to make," said Burton. "It's my most exciting project of all because it's a mixture of live-action, stop-motion and new animation techniques. It'll be like no other cartoon you've ever seen. Although I designed it a long time ago, it's a clear one in my mind. Actually, I can't wait to see it myself!"

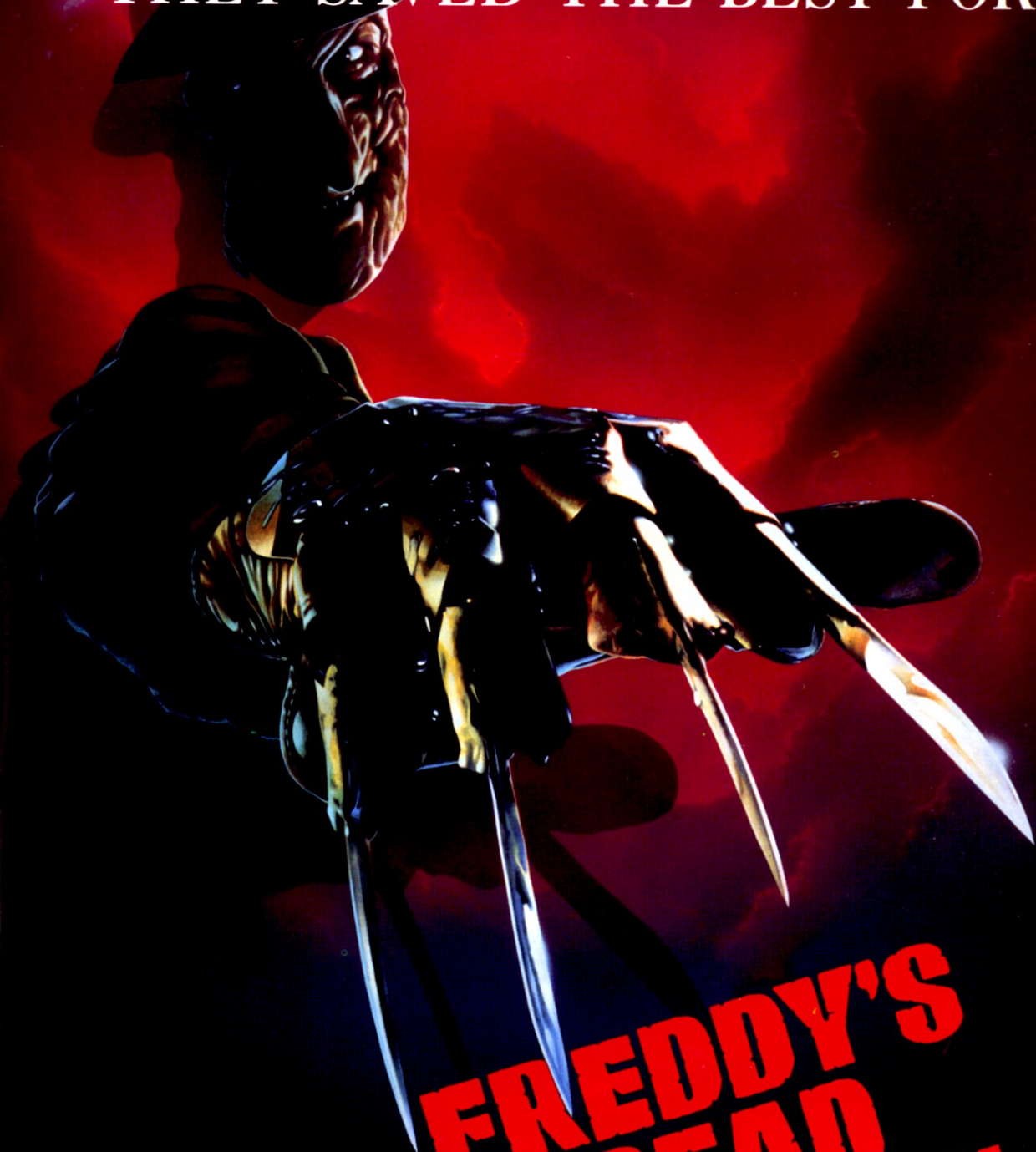
According to a source at Warner Bros, Burton has signed to direct BATMAN II, which starts shooting on the studio lot in Burbank in August, for worldwide release in the summer of 1992. □

Giraud Patrick, 25 Avenue Roger Salengro, 93420 Villepinte (France).

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